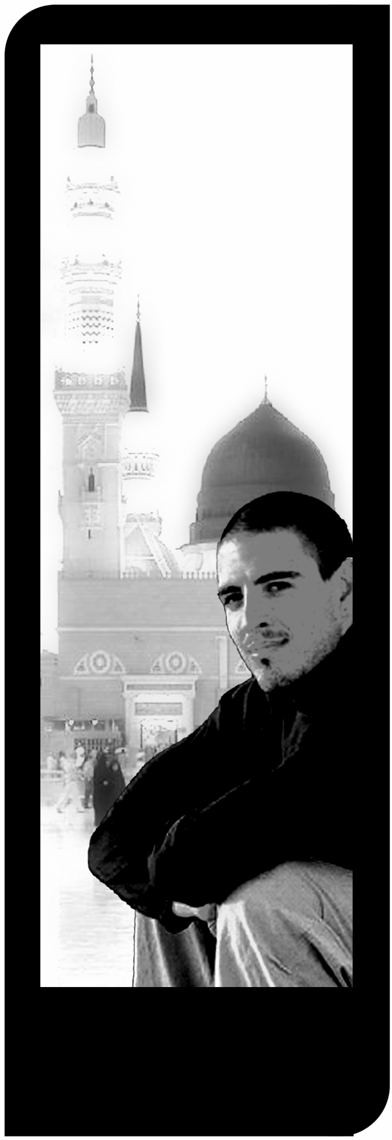
In the Name of Allāh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ ٱللّٰهِ عَلَيْهِ ٱلسَّلاٰمُ عَنْ آبٰائِهِ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلسَّلاٰمُ: قٰالَ جٰاءَ رَجُلٌ إِلَىٰ رَسُولِ ٱللّٰهِ (صَلَّىٰ ٱللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) فَقٰالَ يٰا رَسُولَ ٱللّٰهِ مٰا ٱلْعِلْمُ؟ قٰالَ: أَلْإِنْصٰاتُ. قٰالَ: ثُمَّ مَهْ؟ قٰالَ: أَلْإِسْتِمٰاعُ. قٰالَ: ثُمَّ مَهْ؟ قٰالَ: أَلْحِفْظُ. قٰالَ: ثُمَّ مَهْ؟ قٰالَ: أَلْعَمَلُ بِهِ. قٰالَ: ثُمَّ مَهْ يٰا رَسُولَ ٱللّٰهِ؟ قٰالَ: نَشْرُهُ.

Abū ʿAbdillāh (peace be upon him) narrates from his ancestors (the Aʾimmah (peace be upon all of them) who have said the following: *"Once a man came to the Messenger of Allāh (blessings of Allāh be upon him and his family) and said, 'O Messenger of Allāh - what is knowledge?' The Messenger replied,* ***'It is silence.'*** *The man then asked, 'Then what?' The Messenger said,* ***'It is listening.'*** *The man asked, 'Then what?' The Messenger said,* ***'Then it is remembering.'*** *The man asked, 'Then what?' The Messenger said,* ***'Then it is to practice (what one has learned).'*** *The man then asked, 'Then what O' Messenger of Allāh?' The Messenger said,* ***'Then it is to disseminate (that which one has learned).'"***

Guiding the Youth of the New Generation



By Ayatullāh Murtaḍā Muṭahharī
Translated by Saleem Bhimji

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السلام عليك يا أبا الفضل العباس ابن أمير المؤمنين علي ابن أبي طالب

Greetings be upon you O' Abal Fadhl al-ʿAbbās ibne Amīr al-Mo'minīn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib

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فَنِعْمَ ٱلصَّابِرُ ٱلْـمُجَاهِدُ ٱلْـمُحَامِي ٱلنَّاصِرُ وَٱلْأَخُ ٱلدَّافِعُ عَنْ أَخِيهِ، ٱلْـمُجِيبُ إِلَـىٰ طَاعَةِ رَبِّهِ، ٱلرَّاغِبُ فِيمَا زَهِدَ فِيهِ غَيْرُهُ مِنَ ٱلثَّوَابِ ٱلْجَزِيلِ، وَٱلثَّنَاءِ ٱلْجَمِيلِ...

"How wonderful is
The patient one, the fighter,
The protector, the helper,
And the brother who defends his brother,
Who responds to the obedience of His Lord,
Who hopes for that which others have renounced,
Of abundant reward and beautiful praise…"

Ziyārat-e-Wārith – Ziyārat of ʿAbbās ibne ʿAlī (peace be upon him)

We commemorate and congratulate firstly our noble Imām of the Time, Imām al-Qāim al-Mahdī ﷵ and all of the true servants of Allah ﷻ on the auspicious 1,400 birth anniversary of the dauntless lion, valiant soldier, selfless servant - the Moon of the Banī Hāshim, Hadhrat ʿAbbās ibne ʿAlī ﷵ.

Hadhrat ʿAbbās ﷵ is one of the finest examples of a Shīʿa (follower) of ʿAlī ﷵ and in light of his 1,400th birth anniversary, we dedicate this book to this great and noble soul. It is hoped that, Inshā-Allāh, with the reading of this book, the Muslims community - especially the youth - will be guided and aided in their struggle towards identifying the true Islām of the Prophet ﷺ, to strive towards an understanding of this wonderful way of life, to become a real servant of Allāh ﷻ and to give up their life in the path of Islām just as Hadhrat ʿAbbās ibne ʿAlī ﷵ.

"I can never weep over the loss of this world and try to escape death when it comes to me. Rather, I will welcome death if it comes to me in the way of Allāh. I shall submit to death cheerfully, joyfully and happily, for Paradise is a much happier abode than this world. This world is not a place worth living. Fortunate is he who dies for Islām." – Hadhrat ʿAbbās ibne ʿAlī ﷵ.

Kasim Sumar
Chairman of the Youth Networking Desk [YND]

Transliteration Table

The method of transliteration of Islāmic terminology from the Arabic language has been carried out according to the standard transliteration table mentioned below.

ء	ʾ	ط	ṭ
ا	a	ظ	ẓ
ب	b	ع	ʿ
ت	t	غ	gh
ث	th	ف	f
ج	j	ق	q
ح	ḥ	ك	k
خ	kh	ل	l
د	d	م	m
ذ	dh	ن	n
ر	r	و	w
ز	z	ي	y
س	s	ه	h
ش	sh		
ص	ṣ		
ض	ḍ		

Long Vowels

ا	ā
و	ū
ي	ī

Short Vowels

ـَـ	a
ـُـ	u
ـِـ	i

In keeping with the Islāmic spirit of showing respect and invoking prayers and blessings whenever the name of Allāh, His Prophet and other noble and righteous personalities are mentioned, we have employed the following ‘Arabic symbols after the names of such personalities:

سبحانه وتعالى

Subḥānhu wa Ta’āla
Used exclusively after the name of Allāh meaning *Glory and Magnificence be to Him.*

صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم

Sallalahu Alayhi wa alihi wa Salam
Used exclusively after the name of Prophet Muḥammad meaning *May blessings of Allāh be upon him and his family.*

عليه السلام

‘Alayhis Salām
Used for any of the male members of the Prophet’s family or previous Prophets of Allāh meaning *Peace be upon him.*

عليها السلام

‘Alayhās Salām
Used for any of the female members of the Prophet’s family or notable women meaning *Peace be upon her.*

عليهم السلام

‘Alayhimus Salām
Used for two or more members of the Prophet’s family or notable personalities meaning *Peace be upon them.*

رضي الله عنه

Radhiallāhu Anhu
Used for any righteous and noble male companions of the Prophet and the A’immah meaning *May Allāh be pleased with him.*

قدس سره

Quddisa Sirruh
Used for scholars and other notable personalities in Islām meaning *May his soul be blessed.*

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Foreword

By Hasnain Walji

"From cradle to one's grave,
Life seems but an illusion.
The phase of youth so brave,
'Tis an even greater illusion."

Abū Faiyyāz

This book is the fruit of one of the many discourses of the distinguished thinker and scholar, Āyatullāh Shahīd Muṭahharī ﵀. Yet again, he conveys the dire need to re-think how we address challenges posed in the modern era dominated by Western culture and its attendant values.

This is a continuation of his life-long quest to bridge the gap that seems to separate the traditional language of religion and the language of modernity. The consequence of such a gap has given rise to misconceptions which have become 'concepts'. One such "concept" is called 'the generation gap'.

Having gained currency, this misconception which has now become an accepted concept, and has taken the form of a self-fulfilling prophecy, has actually created a 'gap' between generations.

It has given a license and respectability to the younger generation to be 'different'. To use modern parlance it has become 'cool' to dress, behave and act differently. This is the roadmap that leads to MTV and the land of hip-hop.

The title, *Guiding the Youth of the New Generation*, becomes all the more relevant in this day and age of outsourcing, e-mails, web portals and "blogging" - Western concepts and values are being adopted around the world with enthusiasm.

Aping the latest fads and fashions have now been extended to call centers in the developing world where young men and women now speak with a Texan drawl and the next minute switch to a New England accent attending to a caller from Boston. Muslim youth can hardly be immune from this.

Readers, especially parents, looking for a quick fix or a laundry list of answers to the challenges will be disappointed. Although this book will raise more questions than it answers, however Āyatullāh Muṭahharī lays the responsibility squarely on the immediately preceding generation, and states:

> "Each generation is responsible for the guidance of the proceeding generation - especially those people who are officially recognized as the leaders of the society – they have a much greater responsibility..."

At the same time exhorts us not to address challenges of today with the solutions of yesterday. In this regard, he states:

> "…the issue of leadership and guidance of this generation differs in its methods and techniques throughout the various time periods and differs according to the groups or people whom we are working with. Thus, we must completely remove the thought from our heads that this new generation must be guided by following the methods used by the previous generations."

It is in this context that the book needs to be understood as providing direction in addressing challenges in a manner relevant to the time we live in.

The late scholar also reminds us of the saying of Imām Jaʿfar ibne Muḥammad as-Ṣādiq عليه السلام that: "The person who is fully aware of the time in which he is living in will never be overcome with bewilderment (of the things around him)."

Therefore being cognizant of the era we live in, we need to focus on the integration of intellectual, social, and emotional aspects that affect our youths and especially students in Colleges and Universities.

The need of this current era is to recognize that our youth continue to struggle with the increasing fragmentation of the learning process as much as the dichotomy of disciplines and contradictions inherent in concepts such as pluralism. They live in an era that subjects them to many and varied ideologies and which demand of them a rational explanation in matters of belief. This awareness can help us to nurture a generation of Muslims who in turn will be able to nurture the next generation.

In closing, we quote the words of the late poet of Pakistan, ʿAllamāh Iqbāl who has written:

Ya Rabb! dil-e-Muslim ko wo zinda tammana dey,
Jo qalb ko germa dey, jo rooh ko tarpa dey.

O Lord, endow the Muslims heart with motivation anew,
Such that it can warm the heart and stir the soul anew.

Phir wadi-e-faran kay her zarrey ko chamka dey,
Phir shok-e-tamasha dey, phir zoq-e-taqaza dey.

Let every drop of the Islamic nation shine once more,
Bless it with determination and zeal once more.

Mehroom-e-tamasha ko phir deeda-e-beena dey,
Dekha hai jo kuch main nay, auron ko bhi dikhla dey.

Those who have been blinded, give them fresh insights too,
What I have perceived, show the same vision to them too.

Hasnain Walji
Plano, Texas
Jumādī ath-Thānī 1425 / August 2004

Biography of the Late By Ayatullāh Murtaḍā Muṭahharī

Ayatullāh Murṭadhā Muṭahharī ﵀, one of the principle architects of the new Islāmic consciousness in Iran, was born on February 2nd, 1920, in Farīmān, then a village and now a township about sixty kilometres from Mashhad, the great centre of Shīʿa pilgrimage and learning in Eastern Iran. His father was Muḥammad Ḥusaīn Muṭahharī, a renown scholar who studied in Najaf and spent several years in Egypt and the Hijāz before returning to Farīmān. The elder Muṭahharī was of a different caste of mind then his son, who in any event came to outshine him. The father was devoted to the works of the celebrated traditionalist, Mullāh Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī ﵀; whereas the son's great hero among the Shīʿa scholars of the past was the theosophist Mullā Sadrā ﵀.

Nonetheless, Āyatullāh Muṭahharī always retained great respect and affection for his father, who was also his first teacher, and he dedicated to him one of his most popular books, Dastān-e-Rastān ("The Epic of the Righteous"), first published in 1960, and which was later chosen as book of the year by the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO in 1965.

At the exceptionally early age of twelve, Muṭahharī began his formal religious studies at the teaching institution in Mashhad, which was then in a state of decline, partly because of internal reasons and partly because of the repressive measures directed by Riḍā Khān, the first Pahlavī autocrat, against all Islāmic institutions. But in Mashhad, Muṭahharī discovered his great love for philosophy, theology, and mysticism, a love that remained with him throughout his life and came to shape his entire outlook on religion:

> *"I can remember that when I began my studies in Mashhad and was still engaged in learning elementary*

Arabic, the philosophers, mystics, and theologians impressed me far more than other scholars and scientists, such as inventors and explorers. Naturally I was not yet acquainted with their ideas, but I regarded them as heroes on the stage of thought."[1]

Accordingly, the figure in Mashhad who aroused the greatest devotion in Muṭahharī was Mīrzā Mahdī Shahīdī Razavī ﷺ, a teacher of philosophy. But Razavī died in 1936, before Muṭahharī was old enough to participate in his classes, and partly because of this reason he left Mashhad the following year to join the growing number of students congregating in the teaching institution in Qum.

Thanks to the skillful stewardship of Shaykh ʿAbdul Karīm Hāʾirī ﷺ, Qum was on its way to becoming the spiritual and intellectual capital of Islāmic Iran, and Muṭahharī was able to benefit there from the instruction of a wide range of scholars. He studied Fiqh and Uṣūl - the core subjects of the traditional curriculum - with Āyatullāh Ḥujjat Kuhkamarī ﷺ, Āyatullāh Sayyid Muḥammad Dāmād ﷺ, Āyatullāh Sayyid Muḥammad Riḍā Gulpāyagānī ﷺ, and Ḥajj Sayyid Ṣadr al-Dīn as-Ṣadr ﷺ. But more important than all these was Āyatullāh Burujerdī ﷺ, the successor of Ḥāʾirī as director of the teaching establishment in Qum. Muṭahharī attended his lectures from his arrival in Qum in 1944 until his departure for Tehran in 1952, and he nourished a deep respect for him.

Fervent devotion and close affinity characterized Muṭahharī's relationship with his prime mentor in Qum, Āyatullāh Rūḥullāh Khumaynī ﷺ. When Muṭahharī arrived in Qum, Āyatullāh Khumaynī was a young lecturer, but he was already marked out from his contemporaries by the profoundness and comprehensiveness of his Islāmic vision and his ability to convey it to others. These qualities were manifested in the celebrated lectures on ethics that he began giving in Qum in the early 1930s.

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[1] ʿIlal-e-Girayish ba Maddīgarī, Page 9

The lectures attracted a wide audience from outside as well as inside the religious teaching institution and had a profound impact on all those who attended them. Muṭahharī made his first acquaintance with Āyatullah Khumaynī at these lectures:

> *"When I migrated to Qum, I found the object of my desire in a personality who possessed all the attributes of Mīrzā Mahdī (Shahīdī Razavī) in addition to others that were peculiarly his own. I realized that the thirst of my spirit would be quenched at the pure spring of that personality. Although I had still not completed the preliminary stages of my studies and was not yet qualified to embark on the study of the rational sciences (maʿqulāt), the lectures on ethics given by that beloved personality every Thursday and Friday were not restricted to ethics in the dry, academic sense but dealt with gnosis and spiritual wayfaring, and thus, they intoxicated me. I can say without exaggeration that those lectures aroused in me such ecstasy that their effect remained with me until the following Monday or Tuesday. An important part of my intellectual and spiritual personality took shape under the influence of those lectures and the other classes I took over a period of twelve years with that spiritual master (ustād-i ilahī) [meaning Āyatullāh Khumaynī]."*[2]

In about 1946, Āyatullāh Khumaynī began lecturing to a small group of students that included both Muṭahharī and his roommate at the Fayziya Madressah, Āyatullāh Muntaẓarī, on two key philosophical texts, the Asfar al-Arbaʿa of Mullā Ṣadra ﵀ and the Sharh-e-Manzuma of Mullā Hādī Sabzwārī ﵀. Muṭahharī's participation in this group, which continued to meet until about 1951, enabled him to establish more intimate links with his teacher. Also in 1946, at the urging of Muṭahharī and Muntaẓarī, the Āyatullāh Khumaynī taught his first formal course on Fiqh and Uṣūl, taking the chapter on rational proofs

[2] Ibid.

from the second volume of Akhund Khurāsānī's Kifāyatal Uṣūl as his teaching text. Muṭahharī followed his course assiduously, while still pursuing his studies of Fiqh with Āyatullāh Burūjerdī.

In the first two post-war decades, Āyatullāh Khumaynī trained numerous students in Qum who became leaders of the Islāmic Revolution and the Islāmic Republic, such that through them (as well as directly), the imprint of his personality was visible on all the key developments of the past decade. But none among his students bore to Āyatullāh Khumaynī the same relationship of affinity as Muṭahharī, an affinity to which the Āyatullāh Khumaynī himself has borne witness to. The pupil and master shared a profound attachment to all aspects of traditional scholarship, without in any way being its captive; a comprehensive vision of Islām as a total system of life and belief, with particular importance ascribed to its philosophical and mystical aspects; an absolute loyalty to the religious institution, tempered by an awareness of the necessity of reform; a desire for comprehensive social and political change, accompanied by a great sense of strategy and timing; and an ability to reach out beyond the circle of the traditionally religious, and gain the attention and loyalty of the secularly educated.

Among the other teachers whose influence Muṭahharī was exposed in Qum, was the great exegete of the Qurʾān and philosopher, Āyatullāh Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusain Ṭabā'ṭabāʾī ﵀. Muṭahharī participated in both Ṭabāṭabāʾī's classes on the Shifāʿ of Abū ʿAlī Sīnā from 1950 to 1953, and the Thursday evening meetings that took place under his direction. The subject of these meetings was materialist philosophy, a remarkable choice for a group of traditional scholars. Muṭahharī himself had first conceived a critical interest in materialist philosophy, especially Marxism, soon after embarking on the formal study of the rational sciences.

According to his own recollections, in about 1946 he began to study the Persian translations of Marxist literature published by the Tudeh party, the major Marxist organization in Iran and at

that time an important force in the political scene. In addition, he read the writings of Taqī Arānī, the main theoretician of the Tudeh party, as well as Marxist publications in ʿArabic emanating from Egypt. At first he had some difficulty understanding these texts because he was not acquainted with modern philosophical terminology, but with continued exertion (which included the drawing up of a synopsis of Georges Pulitzer's Elementary Principles of Philosophy), he came to master the whole subject of materialist philosophy. This mastery made him an important contributor to Ṭabāʾṭabāī's circle and later, after his move to Tehran, an effective combatant in the ideological war against Marxism and Marxist-influenced interpretations of Islām.

Numerous refutations of Marxism have been essayed in the Islāmic world, both in Iran and elsewhere, but almost all of them fail to go beyond the obvious incompatibilities of Marxism with religious belief and the political failures and inconsistencies of Marxist political parties. Muṭahharī, by contrast, went to the philosophical roots of the matter and demonstrated with rigorous logic the contradictory and arbitrarily hypothetic nature of key principles of Marxism. His polemical writings are characterized more by intellectual than rhetorical or emotional force.

However, for Muṭahharī, philosophy was far more than a polemical tool or intellectual discipline; it was a particular style of religiosity, a way of understanding and formulating Islām. Muṭahharī belongs, in fact, to the tradition of Shīʿa philosophical concern that goes back at least as far as Nasīr ad-Dīn Ṭuṣī, one of Muṭahharī's personal heroes. To say that Muṭahharī's view of Islām was philosophical is not to imply that he lacked spirituality or was determined to subordinate revealed dogma to philosophical interpretation and to impose philosophical terminology on all domains of religious concern; rather it means that he viewed the attainment of knowledge and understanding as the prime goal and benefit of religion and for that reason

assigned to philosophy a certain primacy among the disciplines cultivated in the religious institution. In this he was at variance with those numerous scholars for whom Fiqh was the be-all and end-all of the curriculum, with modernists for whom philosophy represented a Hellenistic intrusion into the world of Islām, and with all those whom revolutionary ardor had made impatient with careful philosophical thought.[3]

The particular school of philosophy to which Muṭahharī adhered was that of Mullā Ṣadra, the "sublime philosophy" (hikmat-i mutaʿāliya) that seeks to combine the methods of spiritual insight with those of philosophical deduction. Muṭahharī was a man of tranquil and serene disposition, both in his general comportment and in his writings. Even when engaged in polemics, he was invariably courteous and usually refrained from emotive and ironical wording. But such was his devotion to Mullā Ṣadrā that he would passionately defend him even against slight or incidental criticism, and he chose for his first grandchild - as well as for the publishing house in Qum that put out his books - the name Ṣadrā.

Insofar as Ṣadrā's school of philosophy attempts to merge the methods of inward illumination and intellectual reflection, it is not surprising that it has been subject to varying interpretations on the part of those more inclined to one method than the other. To judge from his writings, Muṭahharī belonged to those for whom the intellectual dimension of Ṣadrā's school was predominant; there is little of the mystical or markedly spiritual tone found in other exponents of Ṣadrā's thought, perhaps because Muṭahharī viewed his own inward experiences as irrelevant to the task of instruction in which he was engaged or even as an intimate secret he should conceal. More likely,

[3] The authoritative statement of this view was made by Sayyid Qutb in his Khasā'is al-Tasawwur al-Islāmī wa Muqawwimatuhu, Cairo, numerous editions, which was translated into Persian and had some influence on views toward philosophy.

however, this predilection for the strictly philosophical dimension of the "sublime philosophy" was an expression of Muṭahharī's own temperament and genius. In this respect, he differed profoundly from his great mentor, Āyatullāh Khumaynī, many of whose political pronouncements continue to be suffused with the language and concerns of mysticism and spirituality.

In 1952, Muṭahharī left Qum for Tehran, where he married the daughter of Āyatullāh Rūḥānī ﵀ and began teaching philosophy at the Madressah Marwi, one of the principal institutions of religious learning in the capital. This was not the beginning of his teaching career, for already in Qum he had begun to teach certain subjects - logic, philosophy, theology, and Fiqh - while still a student himself. But Muṭahharī seems to have become progressively impatient with the somewhat restricted atmosphere of Qum, with the factionalism prevailing among some of the students and their teachers, and with their remoteness from the concerns of society. His own future prospects in Qum were also uncertain.

In Tehran, Muṭahharī found a broader and more satisfying field of religious, educational, and ultimately political activity. In 1954, he was invited to teach philosophy at the Faculty of Theology and Islāmic Sciences of Tehran University, where he taught for twenty-two years. First the regularization of his appointment and then his promotion to professor was delayed by the jealousy of mediocre colleagues and by political considerations (for Muṭahharī's closeness to Āyatullāh Khumaynī was well known). But the presence of a figure such as Muṭahharī in the secular university was significant and effective. Many men of Madressah background had come to teach in the universities, and they were often of great erudition. However, almost without exception they had discarded an Islāmic worldview, together with their turbans and cloaks. Muṭahharī, by contrast, came to the university as an articulate and convinced exponent of Islāmic science and wisdom, almost as an envoy of the religious institution to the secularly educated. Numerous people

responded to him, as the pedagogical powers he had first displayed in Qum now fully unfolded.

In addition to building his reputation as a popular and effective university lecturer, Muṭahharī participated in the activities of the numerous professional Islāmic associations (anjumanhā) that had come into being under the supervision of Mahdī Bāzārgān and Āyatullāh Taleqānī ﵀, lecturing to their doctors, engineers, teachers and helping to coordinate their work. A number of Muṭahharī's books in fact consist of the revised transcripts of series of lectures delivered to the Islāmic associations.

Muṭahharī's wishes for a wider diffusion of religious knowledge in society and a more effective engagement of religious scholars in social affairs led him in 1960 to assume the leadership of a group of Tehran ʿUlamā known as the Anjuman-e-Mahāna-yi Dīnī ("The Monthly Religious Society"). The members of this group, which included the late Āyatullāh Beheshtī ﵀, a fellow-student of Muṭahharī in Qum, organized monthly public lectures designed simultaneously to demonstrate the relevance of Islām to contemporary concerns, and to stimulate reformist thinking among the ʿUlamā. The lectures were printed under the title of Guftār-e-Māh ("Discourse of the Month") and proved very popular, but the government banned them in March 1963 when Āyatullāh Khumaynī began his public denunciation of the Pahlavī regime.

A far more important venture in 1965 of the same kind was the foundation of the Ḥusayniya-e-Irshād, an institution in north Tehran, designed to gain the allegiance of the secularly educated young to Islām. Muṭahharī was among the members of the directing board; he also lectured at the Ḥusayniya-e-Irshād and edited and contributed to several of its publications. The institution was able to draw huge crowds to its functions, but this success - which without doubt exceeded the hopes of the founders, was overshadowed by a number of internal problems. One such problem was the political context of the institution's activities, which gave rise to differing opinions on the

opportuneness of going beyond reformist lecturing to political confrontation.

The spoken word plays in general a more effective and immediate role in promoting revolutionary change than the written word, and it would be possible to compose an anthology of key sermons, addresses, and lectures that have carried the Islāmic Revolution of Iran forward. But the clarification of the ideological content of the revolution and its demarcation from opposing or competing schools of thought have necessarily depended on the written word, on the composition of works that expound Islāmic doctrine in systematic form, with particular attention to contemporary problems and concerns. In this area, Muṭahharī's contribution was unique in its volume and scope. Muṭahharī wrote assiduously and continuously, from his student days in Qum up to 1979, the year of his martyrdom. Much of his output was marked by the same philosophical tone and emphasis already noted, and he probably regarded as his most important work Uṣūl-e-Falsafa wa Ravish-e-Ri'ālism ("The Principles of Philosophy and the Method of Realism"), the record of Ṭabāṭabāī's discourses to the Thursday evening circle in Qum, supplemented with Muṭahharī's comments. But he did not choose the topics of his books in accordance with personal interest or predilection, but with his perception of need; wherever a book was lacking on some vital topic of contemporary Islāmic interest, Muṭahharī sought to supply it.

Single handily, he set about constructing the main elements of a contemporary Islāmic library. Books such as ʿAdl-e-Ilāhī ("Divine Justice"), Nizām-e-Ḥuquq-e-Zan dar Islām ("The System of Women's Rights in Islām"), Mas'ala-yi Ḥijāb ("The Question of the Veil"), Ashnā'i ba ʿUlūm-e-Islāmī ("An Introduction to the Islāmic Sciences"), and Muqaddima bar Jahānbīnī-yi Islāmi ("An Introduction to the Worldview of Islām") were all intended to fill a need, to contribute to an accurate and systematic understanding of Islām and the problems in the Islāmic society.

These books may well come to be regarded as Muṭahharī's most lasting and important contribution to the rebirth of Islāmic Iran, but his activity also had a political dimension that admittedly subordinate, should not be overlooked. While a student and fledgling teacher in Qum, he had sought to instill political consciousness in his contemporaries and was particularly close to those among them who were members of the Fida'iyan-i Islām, the Militant Organization founded in 1945 by Nawwab Safawī. The Qum headquarters of the Fida'iyan was the Madrasa-yi Fayziya, where Muṭahharī himself resided, and he sought in vain to prevent them from being removed from the Madressah by Āyatullāh Burūjerdī, who was resolutely set against all political confrontation with the Shah's regime.

During the struggle for the nationalization of the Iranian Oil Industry, Muṭahharī sympathized with the efforts of Āyatullāh Kāshānī ﷺ and Dr. Muḥammad Musaddiq, although he criticized the latter for his adherence to secular nationalism. After his move to Tehran, Muṭahharī collaborated with the Freedom Movement of Bāzārgān and Taleqānī, but never became one of the leading figures in the group.

His first serious confrontation with the Shah's regime came during the uprising of Khurdad 15th, 1342/June 6th, 1963, when he showed himself to be politically, as well as intellectually, a follower of Āyatullāh Khumaynī by distributing his declarations and urging support for him in the sermons he gave.[4] He was accordingly arrested and held for forty-three days. After his release, he participated actively in the various organizations that came into being to maintain the momentum that had been created by the uprising, most importantly the Association of Militant Religious Scholars (Jamiʿa yi Ruhāniyāt-e-Mubāriz). In November 1964, Āyatullāh Khumaynī entered on his fourteen

[4] Muṭahharī's name comes ninth in a list of clerical detainees prepared by the military prosecutor's office in June, 1963. See facsimile of the list in Dihnavi, Qiyam-e-Khunin-i 15 Khurdad 42 ba Rivāyat-e-Asnād, Tehran, 1360 Sh./1981, Page 77.

years of exile, spent first in Turkey and then in Najaf, and throughout this period Muṭahharī remained in touch with Āyatullāh Khumaynī, both directly - by visits to Najaf - and indirectly.

When the Islāmic Revolution approached its triumphant climax in the winter of 1978 and Āyatullāh Khumaynī left Najaf for Paris, Muṭahharī was among those who travelled to Paris to meet and consult with him. His closeness to Āyatullāh Khumaynī was confirmed by his appointment to the Council of the Islāmic Revolution, the existence of which Āyatullāh Khumaynī announced on January 12th, 1979.

Muṭahharī's services to the Islāmic Revolution were brutally curtailed by his assassination on May 1st, 1979. The murder was carried out by a group known as Furqān, which claimed to be the protagonists of a "progressive Islām," one freed from the allegedly distorting influence of the religious scholars. Although Muṭahharī appears to have been chairman of the Council of the Islāmic Revolution at the time of his assassination, it was as a thinker and a writer that he was martyred.

In 1972, Muṭahharī published a book entitled ʿIllal-i Girayish ba Maddigarī ("Reasons for the Turn to Materialism"), an important work analyzing the historical background of materialism in Europe and Iran. During the revolution, he wrote an introduction to the eighth edition of this book, attacking distortions of the thought of Ḥafiz and Hallaj that had become fashionable in some segments of Irānian society and refuting certain materialistic interpretations of the Qurʾān. The source of the interpretations was the Furqān group, which sought to deny fundamental Qurʾānic concepts such as the divine transcendence and the reality of the hereafter. As always in such cases, Muṭahharī's tone was persuasive and solicitous, not angry or condemnatory, and he even invited a response from Furqān and other interested parties to comment on what he had written. Their only response was the gun.

The threat to assassinate all who opposed them was already contained in the publications of Furqān, and after the publication of the new edition of ʿIllal-e-Girayish ba Maddigarī, Muṭahharī apparently had some premonition of his martyrdom. According to the testimony of his son, Mujtabā, a kind of detachment from worldly concerns became visible in him; he augmented his nightly prayers and readings of the Qurʾān, and he once dreamed that he was in the presence of the Prophet ﷺ, together with Āyatullāh Khumaynī قدس سره.

On Tuesday, May 1, 1979, Muṭahharī went to the house of Dr. Yadullāh Saḥābī, in the company of other members of the Council of the Islāmic Revolution. At about 10:30 at night, he and another participant in the meeting, Engineer Katiraʿi, left Saḥābī's house. Walking by himself to an adjacent alley where the car that was to take him home was parked, Muṭahharī suddenly heard an unknown voice call out to him. He looked around to see where the voice was coming from, and as he did, a bullet struck him in the head, entering beneath the right earlobe and exiting above the left eyebrow. He died almost instantly, and although he was rushed to a nearby hospital, there was nothing that could be done but mourn for him. The body was left in the hospital the following day, and then on Thursday, amid widespread mourning, it was taken for funeral prayers first to Tehran University and then to Qum for burial, next to the grave of Shaykh ʿAbdul Karīm Hāʾirī قدس سره.

Āyatullāh Khumaynī قدس سره wept openly when Muṭahharī was buried in Qum, and he described him as his "dear son," and as "the fruit of my life," and as "a part of my flesh." But in his eulogy Āyatullāh Khumaynī also pointed out that with the murder of Muṭahharī neither his personality was diminished, nor was the course of the revolution interrupted:

> *"Let the evil-wishers know that with the departure of Muṭahharī - his Islāmic personality, his philosophy and learning, have not left us. Assassinations cannot destroy the Islāmic personality of the great men of Islām…Islām*

grows through sacrifice and martyrdom of its cherished ones. From the time of its revelation up to the present time, Islām has always been accompanied by martyrdom and heroism."[5]

The personage and legacy of Āyatullāh Muṭahharī have certainly remained unforgotten in the Islāmic Republic, to such a degree that his posthumous presence has been almost as impressive as the attainments of his life. The anniversary of his martyrdom is regularly commemorated, and his portrait is ubiquitous throughout Iran. Many of his unpublished writings are being printed for the first time, and the whole corpus of his work is now being distributed and studied on a massive scale. In the words of Āyatullāh Khamene'ī, President of the Republic, the works of Muṭahharī have come to constitute "the intellectual infrastructure of the Islāmic Republic."

Efforts are accordingly under way to promote a knowledge of Muṭahharī's writings outside the Persian-speaking world as well, and the Ministry of Islāmic Guidance has sponsored translations of his works into languages as diverse as Spanish and Malay. In a sense, however, it will be the most fitting memorial to Muṭahharī if revolutionary Iran proves able to construct a polity, society, economy and culture that are authentically and integrally Islāmic. For Muṭahharī's life was oriented to a goal that transcended individual motivation, and his martyrdom was the final expression of that effacement of self.

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[5] Text of Āyatullāh Khumaynī's eulogy in Yādnama-yi Ustād-i Shahīd Murtaḍa Muṭahharī, pp. 3-5.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

﴿ أُدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَٱلْمَوْعِظَةِ ٱلْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُم بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴾

"Invite others to the path of your Lord through wisdom and good exhortation and argue with them in the best possible manner. Without doubt, your Lord knows best those who have strayed away from His path and He also knows best those who have been correctly guided."[6]

In reality, the discussion for this paper which will be covered under the topic of *"Guiding the Youth of the New Generation"* is actually related to a common responsibility which applies to all Muslims in general and specifically to those Muslims who hold the position of official religious leadership of the society. There is a principle in Islām which we all know and it states that: *Within the sacred dīn of al-Islām, responsibilities are shared amongst the people.* By this we mean that people are the guardians and are responsible for one another and we all share in this responsibility towards each other:

كُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ وَ كُلُّكُمْ مَسْؤُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ

"Each one of you is a shepherd and each one of you is responsible for his flock."[7]

Rather, each generation is the guardian and is responsible for another generation. Each generation is responsible for the

[6] Sūratul Nahl (16), Verse 125
[7] Jāmiʿ al-Ṣaghīr, Page 95

generation which comes after them and is responsible to ensure that the religion and the guidance which has been given to the previous generations which have been protected and carried from hand to hand and have reached the next generation, can in turn, be given to the future generations. Therefore, each proceeding generation must be ready and equipped to accept the teachings (of the religion) and make the best use of them.

Therefore, the discussion of leadership of the youth is a discussion which also includes responsibilities which all of us are obligated to fulfill.

The thing which we bring forth in this discussion as the unknown agent and which we must carefully think about and try to find a way to improve, can be stated as being the following: *The leadership and guidance of an individual, or even an entire generation does not take shape in the same ways and manners within altered instances and conditions (in different times) – rather, it is different. Thus, the form of leadership must also take different modes and methods. The ways and means used in this leadership also differ, and one general prescription cannot be given which would work for all people and all generations living in different times.*

Due to this fact, in each and every era and while living under different conditions, we must carefully think about this issue and through contemplation, we must see in what way the leadership and governing should take form and what prescription must be given to the society.

Two Types of Responsibilities

In the speech that I had given in this same venue under the topic of *"Amr bil Maʿrūf wa Nahī ʿAnil Munkar" (commanding to that which is right and forbidding from that which is evil),* I alluded to a point which I will repeat here and that is: our religious responsibilities are of two types - some responsibilities are

related to our performance of a task which takes shape in one particular form and shape. All of the particular aspects of the specified task and its individual facets have been explained by the religion of Islām and we have been told that we must perform a particular act in its specified form adhering to the specific conditions. Of course, that particular action has been ordered to be performed (by Allāh ﷻ) and there is a reason for it, however we are not responsible for the outcome or the result of the action. These sorts of actions are referred to as *Taʿabudiyāt* (issues that have been legislated which we must follow as acts of worship). It is these sorts of actions which we can also refer to as those which are the "*Responsibility of the Form and Shape of the Actions*".

For example, the Ṣalāt is an act which has a specified introductory act related to it (Wudhū, Tayammum, Ghusl) and conditions (relating to it); it has certain particular provisions and parts to it; there are also specified things which must not be performed and certain things which invalidate the prayers. We have been commanded to perform the Ṣalāt regardless of the circumstances, and in its particular shape and form it is the purest form of obeying the orders of Allāh ﷻ. Of course though, this act of the Ṣalāt in its' particular form has been ordered for a result or outcome - there is a direct corollary in the performance of this act:

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ ٱلْفَحْشَآءِ وَٱلْمُنكَرِ ﴾

"Surely the Ṣalāt keeps a person away from evil and wickedness."[8]

We are simply accountable for carrying out this act and are not responsible for the outcome that this act will produce. If we perform the act in the correct and complete way as it has been shown to us and how we have been ordered to perform it, then

[8] Sūratul ʿAnkabūt (29), Verse 45

naturally the outcome (distancing ourselves from evil and wickedness) will follow.

The second type of responsibility which we have within the faith of Islām is referred to as the "*Responsibility of the Outcome.*" By this we mean that the outcome or end result of the act is also the responsibility of the person. Just like a person sometimes says, *'I want such and such of an outcome for this act of mine.'* However as for how that outcome will come about - through what channels and preliminary steps, by what conditions and how these will all be carried out – we must state that they should be carried out in the best possible way, however there is not one single, firm and describable way that it must be done. Rather, the ways, methods and through what channels this outcome can come about changes with time and place.

Let me give you an example. Let us suppose that you have a difficulty – for example, one of your friends is in prison. There is a time where you expect a specific task to be completed from a specific person in relation to this trouble that you and your friend are in. For example, your friend gives another person a letter and tells him to make sure that he gives this letter to a particular person - and that too at a certain time. Obviously we can say that this letter was written for a purpose and goal, however the other party is only responsible to deliver the letter to the person whom you specified. Another time, you want to reach the outcome by yourself directly and thus, have no need for the preliminary steps. You tell your friend that you want him to help you get out of prison - however through what ways and means should be used - these are not specified by you. The person himself must go and see what the best way is to carry out this task.

Usually, these sorts of responsibilities take form where the means to carry out the task is not of one type – meaning that the mode varies. In one instance, the person must make use of a particular way and method, and at another time, he must make

use of another method – the specialties of the time and place that he is in and in addition, the other particulars, may differ. In these sorts of instances, the person must sit down, ponder, think and come up with the best possible means to reach an outcome.

Within the religion of Islām, we have both types of responsibilities. The Ṣalāt (prayers) and Ṣawm (fasting) and all other acts of worship make up the first form of responsibility; and things such as Jihād (the sacred defense of Muslims and the Muslim territory) form the second type of responsibility. In relation to Jihād, the Muslims have an obligation to defend the nucleus of Islām and to protect the freedom of the Muslims – however through what means? Do they defend the cause with a sword, gun or something else? These things have not been specified and in principle, these sorts of things are not able to be specified and generalized! In each and every age, the Muslims are obligated to choose the best ways and methods to carry out this task (of defence):

﴿ وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مَّا ٱسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِّنْ قُوَّةٍ وَمِنْ رِّبَاطِ ٱلْخَيْلِ تُرْهِبُونَ بِهِ عَدُوَّ ٱللّٰهِ وَعَدُوَّكُمْ وَآخَرِينَ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ لاَ تَعْلَمُونَهُمُ ٱللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُهُمْ وَمَا تُنفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللّٰهِ يُوَفَّ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لاَ تُظْلَمُونَ ﴾

"Make ready your strength against them to the utmost of your power including steeds of war to strike terror into (the hearts of) the enemies of Allāh and your enemies and others besides whom you may not know but whom Allāh does know. Whatever you shall spend in the

> *cause of Allāh will be repaid back to you and you shall not be treated unjustly"*[9]

Thus we must see – what is the best form or method of guidance in each and every time and era?

The issue of guidance and leadership is related to the second form of responsibility mentioned. The Muslims are responsible for the guidance of one another. Each generation is responsible for the guidance of the next generation - especially those people who are officially recognized as the leaders of the society – they have a much greater duty.

In any case, this outcome – meaning that of finding the mode and way of guidance – must be realized. However as for the ways and methods which should be used to reach to this goal, these have not been specified or earmarked for specific times and or for eternity.

The noble verse of the Qur᾿ān states:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَاراً وَقُودُهَا ٱلنَّاسُ وَ ٱلْحِجَارَةُ ﴾

> *"O' you who possess true faith! Save yourselves and your families from the fire of hell whose fuel is that of mankind and stones!"* [10]

This verse means that we must protect ourselves and our families from the fire of hell whose fuel is men and stones. Thus, we see that there is an outcome that we must reach which is to

[9] Sūratul Anfāl (8), Verse 60
[10] Sūratul Taḥrīm (66), Verse 6

save ourselves and our families, however the way to reach this outcome has not been specified.

In Islām, there is no complete, 100% correct method of guidance and leadership that has been specified in which all of the parts – including the introductory steps, forms, conditions and things which must be performed have been mentioned. In principle these things cannot be specified and brought forth since they differ (according to the time and place that one is living in).

The (general) leadership of the people is not like the Ṣalāt which is a matter of obedience to Allāh ﷻ or for example the recitation of incantations and spells in which the person would simply memorize that which he wishes to recite to charm and control scorpions or snakes where any time a scorpion or snake would come around the person, he would recite the things which he has memorized to keep away or to tame the predator – meaning that there is no specific method which can be employed in these regards.

Methods of Leadership are Relative and Temporary

At a certain time and place, it may be through one thing that people receive guidance, however it is possible that in another time and place, that same thing may lead to misguidance and being led astray!

If the same logic that causes an old, illiterate woman to become a true believer is used by an intelligent, learned person, then it may actually cause him to being led astray. Furthermore, it is possible that a book that is in agreement with the thoughts of a particular time and which is in conjunction with the opinions of a specific era and at the level of their thinking, and which would lead to the guidance of the people (of that time), may actually be classified as a book of misguidance in another time period!

We have books that, in their own time period, fulfilled the requirements and responsibilities for when they were written and hundreds and thousands of people received guidance through such a book; however those same books – in our time period – would not guide anybody! These books are deemed too simple and could lead to the misguidance and cause doubts and confusion in the minds of the people and thus, would be classified as books of misguidance - such a book whose buying and selling, printing and distributing would not be free of doubt!

It is amazing! A book that had led thousands – rather hundreds of thousands of people to the path of true guidance in the past may now be classified as a book of misguidance? Yes! With the exception of the Heavenly Book (the Noble Qurʾān) and the true words of the Maʿṣūmīn عليهم السلام, any other book we speak about has a particular message that is aimed at a specific and limited time period. When that era is over, the book is then of no use.

This issue that I have just spoken about is a very important, societal issue and even today is still regarded as an unknown, strange and unfamiliar issue that we must overcome, however this issue has never been discussed nor brought up. I do not anticipate that this issue will be made completely clear in this gathering of ours, however it must continuously be stated that we must accept that the ways to guidance are specific for their own time periods.

With this said, it is necessary that we now bring forth proofs from the Islāmic texts in relation to this topic so that may be known that what we discuss here is the view expressed in the Islāmic works.

I started out my discussion with a verse of the Qurʾān which states:

﴿ أُدْعُ إِلَــى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَ ٱلْمَوْعِظَةِ ٱلْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُم بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ ﴾

"Call others to the path of your Lord through wisdom and good exhortation and argue with them in the best possible manner."[11]

According to the unanimous opinion of the commentators of the Qur'ān, this verse presents us with three different ways to invite people and offers us three distinct ways of guiding the people. Each of these three ways of guidance must be used in their own specific instances.

This verse tells us that we must call people to the way of our Lord. The word Lord (رب) is a special term meaning one who is responsible for upbringing and nurturing. Since this level of guidance is a level of invitation as well as upbringing and nurturing, the word used here is Lord (رب). Therefore, we are told to invite people to the path of our Lord – the path which people must be nurtured and trained upon – but through what means?

We must use wisdom (الحكمة). Wisdom is in the meaning of persuasive, firm speech which has neither marks of alteration in it, nor one in which doubts can occur. In the terminology of the people of logic and the philosophers, this is speech whose preamble is 100% based on pure certainty. By this we mean that the people must be called to the path of the Lord with proof, wisdom and knowledge that is 100% pure and which is completely unadulterated. The commentators of the Qur'ān have mentioned that inviting people through the use of logical, intellectual wisdom, proofs and evidence is limited to one particular group of people who have the ability to make use of this method.

[11] Sūratul Nahl (16), Verse 125

The second method is through good exhortation (والموعظة الحسنة) meaning that we must call the people to their Lord through good words, advice and warnings which their heart and soul will be in agreement with. There are some people who do not possess the ability to express their beliefs through the use of their intelligence and academic proofs, and if an intellectual issue is presented to them, they immediately become confused. Thus, the way to guide them is through good council and warnings. Such people must be guided through employing stories, narratives and wisdom-based anecdotes and anything that would bring ease and comfort to their hearts. The responsibility of exhortation and good council is to work on the heart of a person, whereas the job of intellectual and logical proofs deal with the brain and thinking ability of a person. A majority of the people are still at a level of basing issues which they believe in on their heart, soul and emotions and are not at a level of using their intellect and thoughts.

The third stage is that of arguing with the people in the best possible way (و جادلهم بالتي هي أحسن). Thus, if a person is put face to face with someone else whose purpose is not to arrive at the truth and whose goal is not to understand what the actual facts are - rather he has come and is ready to speak, argue and bring up points of contention - then the other one too must dispute with that person as he is quarreling with. However, we must argue with such a person in the best possible manner such that the argument does not stray from the path of the truth and reality. Therefore, we must not resort to unfairness or injustice in arguments, nor can we resort to lying or other similar things.

This verse gives us many different ways through which we can guide people and each way has been put in place for a particular instance in time. Thus, it is clear that the ways through which we can guide people are not all the same, nor are they equal!

Reasons for the Differences Among the Miracles of the Messengers

There is a ḥādīth which is somewhat well-known which backs up our claim of differences in the methods of guidance as seen in the reasons for the differences among the miracles of the various Messengers sent. Although this ḥādīth is in relation to the various miracles of the Prophets which were of a different nature to coincide with different time periods, however it still backs up our claims (in relation to the methods of guiding the youth). This ḥādīth is actually the response that Ibne Sikkiyt رضي الله عنه received from Imām al-Hādī عليه السلام - the tenth Divinely appointed religious guide.

Ibne Sikkiyt رضي الله عنه is well known among the experts of ʿArabic grammar. His name is mentioned quite frequently in the books of ʿArabic syntax and it is stated that he lived around the time of Imām ʿAlīe ibn Muḥammad al-Hādī عليه السلام – thus, it was around the same time as the political leadership of Mutawwakil. Ibne Sikkiyt رضي الله عنه was also a follower of the Shīʿa faith and was killed at the hands of Mutawwakil. It has been said that the reason why he was killed was because he had a strong love for Imām ʿAlī عليه السلام and his family عليهم السلام.

One day Ibne Sikkiyt رضي الله عنه was in the presence of Mutawwakil when two of the sons of Mutawwakil came into the gathering. Mutawwakil, about whom it has been proverbially stated that he was one who possessed a sword that was always in search of blood turned towards Ibne Sikkiyt رضي الله عنه and said to him, "Are my (two) sons better or are the sons of ʿAlī - meaning al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusaīn - better?" This knowledgeable man (Ibne Sikkiyt رضي الله عنه) was so surprised at Mutawwakil that he immediately replied to him, "In my opinion, Qambar رضي الله عنه, the servant of ʿAlī was better than your two sons and he (Qambar رضي الله عنه) is even better than your two sons' father." At this point, Mutawwakil gave the order for his Turkish slave to come into the room and cut the

tongue of Ibne Sikkiyt رحمه الله out – and it is in this state that he died.

In any case, this man asked Imām al-Hādī عليه السلام "O' Son of the Messenger of Allāh! Why is it that when Prophet Mūsā عليه السلام was raised as a Prophet, his signs and the ways and miracles that he employed to invite the people and to bring guidance to them was through his staff being transformed into a serpent, and his hand that radiated with Divine light and other things such as this. However when Prophet ʿIsā عليه السلام was raised as a Prophet, we see that his method and the miracles which he used to invite the people was something different. He cured people who were born blind; he healed the lepers; he brought the dead back to life and other things such as this. However our Prophet ﷺ – when he was appointed as a Messenger, his form of miracle were none of these – meaning his miracle was through expression and words – the Noble Qurʾān."

The Imām عليه السلام replied to him that, "This was due to the difference in times when these Prophets were raised. During the time of Prophet Mūsā عليه السلام, people were amazed by magic and trickery, thus, the miracles of Mūsā عليه السلام resembled the things that the others were performing, but the difference was that Prophet Mūsā عليه السلام brought a miracle with substance to it, whereas the other people had magic and witchcraft.

As for the time of Prophet ʿIsā عليه السلام, his era was one in which doctors were in abundance and they were able to cure the most serious of sicknesses and this brought amazement and bewilderment to the masses. Thus, Allāh سبحانه وتعالى gave ʿIsā عليه السلام miracles that would be in line with what the people of his time were performing.

As for the time of the seal of the Prophets ﷺ, his time was that of speech and verbal communication and the attention that people paid to oratory powers was very high. It is for this reason that the greatest teaching of Islām was brought forth through the

noble words clothed in the perfect garment of eloquence and expression (the Noble Qurʾān)."

Ibne Sikkiyt رحمه الله thoroughly benefited from the answer given to him by the Imām عليه السلام and now that he understood this issue, he said to the Imām, "O' Son of the Messenger of Allāh! What is the Ḥujjah of Allāh right now?" The Imām عليه السلام replied to him, "Intelligence" and said to him:

هٰذَا وَ ٱللّٰهِ هُوَ ٱلْجَوَابِ

"This, by Allāh is the answer."

Thus, it is clear that the reason for the difference in miracles of the Prophets was that through each of them, they were able to guide the people in different time periods. If this was not the case, then it is possible that from Ādam عليه السلام till Muḥammad ﷺ – if Prophet Ādam عليه السلام had any miracles and if he was a Prophet (since there are some people who say that he was not a Prophet) - there would have only been one type of miracle. However we see that this is not the case and that each and every Prophet brought along with him his own specific miracle that was fit for his time and age.

The Method of the Prophets

There is a well-known ḥādīth of the Prophet ﷺ which has been preserved in the book al-Kāfī and in these last few days, through some of our friends who have the books of the Ahlus Sunnah at their disposal and have done research through these books, it is clear that this ḥādīth also exists in their books. The Noble Prophet ﷺ has said:

إِنَّا مَعَاشِرَ ٱلْأَنْبِيَاءِ أُمِرْنَا أَنْ نُكَلِّمَ ٱلنَّاسَ عَلَىٰ
قَدَرِ عُقُولِهِمْ

> *"We, the assembly of Prophets have been commanded to speak to the people according to their level of intelligence."*[12]

Whenever the Prophets wished to speak to people, they spoke to them according to their individual level of intelligence and also took into account the level of their aptitude and spoke to them in the way that best suited the people's intelligence. We must keep in mind that the intelligence of the Prophets ﷺ is much higher than all other people and the people around them have a lower level of understanding. Thus, the Prophets would not speak high nor use grand concepts to the 'common people' as this would only make the people more confused. Similarly, the Prophets would not answer the questions of a wise person in the same method which they would answer an old, inerudite person.

Mawlawī alludes to the concept mentioned in the above ḥādīth in his poem which states:

پست می گویم به اندازه عقول

عیب نبودی این، بود کار رسول

"They say it is bad to speak to the intelligence of the people. This is a not a shortcoming, rather, it is the job of the Messenger."

The one difference that lies between the method of the Prophets and that of the philosophers is that the philosophers employ one frame of logic and one style of speech at all times. The philosophers only have one type of merchandise 'for sale' in their proverbial shop. Those who come to them to 'buy things' are only one class of people - and this is the shortcoming of the philosopher as they do not see their aim and purpose in life except to cover themselves with a series of (philosophical) terminologies. Thus, philosophers are forced to only go to one

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12 al-Kāfī, Volume 1, Page 23

particular segment of the society who are aware of the way that they speak and who understand their words.

It has been mentioned that above the door of the well-known school of Plato – which was actually a garden outside the city of Athens whose name was the "Academy" and which even today, due to the scientific gatherings that took place there, is still known by the name, Academy, that there was a poem written which states, *"Whoever has not studied geometry must not enter into this school."*

In the school and methodology that the Prophets used, all types of students would be able to benefit from that which was being said. It is here that all sorts of people could be found – from the highest of the (academically) high whom even the likes of Plato would need to study under, to the lowest of the low such that not even an elderly, simple person would have any use for such a person! It was not written in any of the schools of the Prophets that if anyone wanted to come and make use of their teachings, that they must have studied to such and such a level. Rather, the more that they have studied, the more talented and ready they would have been – thus enabling them to make more use of the teachings of the Prophets. If they were less mentally prepared, then they would only be able to make use of the teachings to their own capability, as it is stated:

إِنَّا مَعَاشِرَ ٱلْأَنْبِيَاءِ أُمِرْنَا أَنْ نُكَلِّمَ ٱلنَّاسَ عَلىٰ قَدَرِ عُقُولِهِمْ

"We, the assembly of Prophets have been commanded to speak to the people according to their level of intelligence."[13]

[13] Ibid.

The Best Students

From this point, we realize that there is another issue which we are able to understand which is that the best students of the philosophers are the same people who lived at their time and saw them - which is at variance with the best students of the Prophets and the intimate friends of Allāh (the Awliyā).

The best students of Plato, Aristotle or Abū ʿAlī Sīnā were those who were directly in their study circle. The person who best understand the thoughts of Abū ʿAlī were people such as Bahmanyār or Abū ʿAbīd Jawzjānī.

However, who were the best students of the Noble Prophet ﷺ, Amīrul Moʾminīn ʿAlī ibne Abī Ṭālib عليه السلام or Imām Jaʿfar ibne Muḥammad as-Ṣādiq عليه السلام? Are their best students only those people who lived at their time and who lived with them? No, this is not the case!

There is a point which the Noble Prophet ﷺ himself had alluded to in one of his speeches. It is possible that those people who lived at the Prophet's ﷺ time did not correctly understand the true meaning of these words (with the exception of people such as Salmān رضي الله عنه, Abū Dharr رضي الله عنه and Miqdād رضي الله عنه, others may not have completely understood his words). The Prophet ﷺ had said:

نَصَرَ ٱللّٰهُ عَبْداً سَمِعَ مَقَالَتِي فَوَعَاهَا وَ بَلَّغَهَا مَنْ لَمْ يَبْلُغْهُ

"May Allāh assist that servant who hears my words, understands them and then conveys them to those who have not been informed of them."[14]

[14] Al-Amālī of Shaykh al-Mufīd, Sitting 23, Page 186

In other narrations, this ḥādīth has been mentioned as:

نَصَّرَ ٱللّٰهُ عَبْدً سَمِعَ مَقٰالَتِي...

"May Allāh show kindness to that servant who hears my words..."

The Prophet ﷺ then said:

رُبَّ حٰامِلِ فِقْهٍ غَيْرَ فَقِيهٍ وَ رُبَّ حٰامِلِ فِقْهٍ إِلـــىٰ مَنْ هُوَ أَفْقَهُ مِنْهُ

"How possible it is that sometimes a person possesses a deep understanding of the religion whereas he himself is not a Faqihī (one firmly grounded in the Islāmic sciences) and how possible it is that sometimes one would transfer his knowledge to another person but that other person is actually more knowledgeable than the one transferring the knowledge."[15]

The lexical meaning of the word Fiqh (فقه) in the religion of Islām actually refers to the reality and the true wisdom of the dīn (religion) which must be achieved through deep study and thought and thus, the meaning in this ḥādīth is the truth and the words which people hear directly from the Imām عليه السلام.

This ḥādīth tells us that there are many people who hear these words and hear the truth of the religion directly from the Imām عليه السلام and memorize it, but they are not people of understanding and analysis. There are also many people who take the words and truths of the religion and pass them on to other people, but the people whom they pass this knowledge on to are much more

[15] Furūʿ al-Kāfī, Volume 5, Page 293

worthy and are much better at understanding and comprehending this knowledge.

For example, a person heard the words of the Prophet ﷺ when he said:

لاٰ ضَرَرَ وَ لاٰ ضِرارَ

"Do not do anything that causes harm to yourself or to others."

However the person who heard these words did not have the ability to understand how deep or profound this sentence was. Nonetheless, he memorized it and then passed it on to the next generation, and the next generation understood it better than he did – and this generation too passed it on to the next generation. It is possible that this will continue on until the twentieth generation and they will understand it better than the first, second and third generation, as this twentieth generation will be better equipped to understand it.

The Qurʾān is the same. We cannot say that the people who were in the past understood the Qurʾān better (than others) - rather, it is the opposite of this. The miracle of the Qurʾān lies in the fact that the Qurʾān is always one step ahead of the commentaries which are written about it – meaning that in each and every time period in which the Qurʾān has been explained, when the knowledge and understanding of the people increases, they will go forth to re-interpret and re-understand the Qurʾān and they will see that the Qurʾān has far surpassed their commentary and is much more advanced than what they had written.

We do not need to go far in this discussion – simply look at the Science of Jurisprudence (ʿIlmul Usūl). Without doubt, the companions of the Noble Prophet ﷺ, the companions of Amīrul Moʾminīn ʿAlī ibne Abī Ṭālib عليه السلام, the companions of Imām Jaʿfar ibne Muḥammad as-Ṣādiq عليه السلام and even companions such as Zurārah رضي الله عنه and Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam رضي الله عنه were people who

had learnt the laws of Fiqh either directly from the Prophet ﷺ or from one of the A'immah ﷺ however they did not understand, analyze and examine the rules of jurisprudence as Muḥaqqiq al-Ḥillī ﷺ, ʿAllāmah al-Ḥilli ﷺ, Shaykh Murtaḍā ﷺ and Shaykh Anṣārī ﷺ did.

Therefore, as we mentioned - in the ways of the philosophers, which person is better at understanding the meanings of his teacher? It is that person who goes the furthest back (to his teacher). However in the school of the Prophets and the intimate friends of Allāh ﷻ, who would be better apt to understanding the meanings and words of these noble personalities? It is those people who come in the future and possess more knowledge and understanding and this is one of the miracles of prophethood.

In a ḥādīth which is found in the section on Tawḥīd, it is mentioned that since Allāh ﷻ knew that in the end of time, people would come forth who would go deep in thought and delve deep in deliberation on a subject, He revealed Sūratul Ikhlāṣ and the first few verses of Sūratul Ḥadīd which include the greatest and most precise issues in relation to Tawḥīd.

By this we mean that the people at the time of the Prophet ﷺ were not worthy of such verses. However in the future, such people would surely come who would be worthy of receiving these verses of the Qurʾān. These verses are what will provide spiritual nourishment to the people of the future time. Of course since these verses express the final utmost limits of elucidating on the concept of Tawḥīd, if a person was to rebel and go against these verses, he would definitely be destroyed. This is the miracle of prophethood and the miracle of the Qurʾān which is:

لاٰ تَنْقضىٰ عَجاٰئِبُهُ وَ لاٰ تَفْنـــىٰ غَراٰئِبُهُ

> *"It's (the Qur'ān) points of amazement never cease to end and its amazement will never pass away."*[16]

All that we have stated up until this point was for this purpose that: when we wish to discuss the issue and speak about the guidance of the youth, we should not have someone stand up and say, "Sir! As if there is a difference between the guidance of the youth and the guidance of the older generation?! As if the Ṣalāt that the youth perform and the Ṣalāt that we the older people perform is different, such that their guidance should also be something different? Just as how in the past we did things, so too we should continue in that same way today. In the past, the way we interacted with our elders and our mothers and fathers and just as we sat together in the Majlis (gathering) and related incidents about the trials and tribulations that faced the Ahlul Baīt عليهم السلام and the ways in which we recognized Allāh سبحانه وتعالى and received guidance - the youth of today too must close their eyes (to the realities) and must go to those same places that we went to and learn and be guided just as we were taught and guided!"

The Generation of the Youth or the Mind Set of the Youth?

I should state this point here that when we use the phrase the "generation of the youth," our aim is not to specify the level or age of the youth. Rather, our aim is to speak to that level or group of people who, due to the effects of their own studies and acquaintance with the new civilizations, have developed a specific way of thought and intellect – whether these people happen to be old or young. However most of these people are from the younger generation and it is because of this that we refer to it as the "generation of the youth," whereas we see that there are also a great number of "older people" who possess this

[16] Nahjul Balāgha, Sermon 150

new way of thinking and there are also many "youth" whose thought pattern and beliefs resemble the older, past generations.

In any case, our intention is to speak in regards to that category of people who possess this specific mode of thinking – something which is increasing day by day. This is a mode of thinking which both the older and younger individuals are beginning to possess and in the future, if God forbid, the correct ways and methods to guide and lead this generation are not put into practice, then we will lose complete control of the future generations.

This issue is a very important issue in our country (Iran) – and even in other Islāmic countries where it is still an important issue – however these countries realized this issue earlier than we did and thus, they put forth this issue with great seriousness, while we still have not taken this matter to be very important.

Generally speaking - in our eyes – the younger generation is simply a generation of people who are infatuated with themselves and who merely worship their lower desires.

We think that when they speak to us, we can simply make faces at them, pass a few sarcastic jokes off of the Mimbar or that we can resort to cursing them (for their errors) and speak bad things to them. We think that we can talk to them and make them listen to that which we are saying, make them laugh at what we tell them and then everything will be alright. We think that we can exclaim and cry out to them: "O' you from such-and-such a (bad) school" and we think that this will solve all of our problems. These are all simply lullabies that we are saying and are only there to keep us in our sleep and prevent us from actually thinking about a way out and a better route to take. In an instant, we will wake up and realize that it is now too late to go back.

Become a Scholar For The Time in Which You Are Living In

There is a speech from Imām Jaʿfar ibne Muḥammad as-Ṣādiq ﷺ which is a very lofty speech. This ḥādīth has been narrated in al-Kāfī[17] in which the following sentence is mentioned in a (long) ḥādīth:

أَلْعَالِمُ بِزَمَانِهِ لاَ تَهْجُمُ عَلَيْهِ ٱللَّوَابِسُ

"The person who is fully aware of the time in which he is living, will never be overcome with bewilderment (of the things around him)."

This means that the person who knows, recognizes and understands the time in which he is living will never fall prey to confusion or perplexity about the things occurring around him.

The word "confused" used in this ḥādīth is commonly used in Fārsī in the meaning of a strong or forceful attack that is launched against another person. However in the ʿArabic language it is in the meaning of a person who is carrying something and all of a sudden, out of his own inability or unawareness, becomes negligent of his surroundings.

In this ḥādīth the Imām ﷺ has told us that, "If a person is fully aware of his own surroundings, then he will never fall prey or victim to the confusion and bewilderment of those things around him, such that one time he looks and forgets even his own hands and feet and he is not able to make use of his own strength and energy nor is he able to gather together his thoughts to solve a problem." This is truly a great saying.

[17] Al-Kāfī, Volume 1, Pages 26 and 27

There are many such important phrases in this same ḥādīth, although I have not memorized all of them, however another line states:

لاٰ يُفلِحُ مَنْ لاٰ يَعْقِلُ وَ لاٰ يَعْقِلُ مَنْ لاٰ يَعْلَمُ

"That person who does not use his intellect will not be successful, and that person who does not have knowledge will not be able to use his intellect."

The meaning of intellect (عقل) is the power or ability to deduce and rationalize something and to establish a relationship between two arguments – meaning to bring about the prerequisites for an issue and then come to a conclusion. The intellect takes its source of inspiration from knowledge and thus, intellect is the lamp whose oil which it runs upon is knowledge. The ḥādīth then goes on to say:

وَ سَوْفَ يَنْجُبُ مَنْ يَفْهَمُ

This means that whoever understands (something), then his outcome will be that he will possess a virtuous, honourable character since the outcome of a treasure or priceless good is through the work which it puts forth. By this it means that we should not be afraid of knowledge and we must not think of knowledge as being something that is dangerous.

However in reality, we are the complete opposite meaning and manifestation of this ḥādīth that states:

أَلْعالِمُ بِزَمانِهِ لاٰ تَهْجُمُ عَلَيْهِ ٱللَّوابِسُ

From the beginning to the end, from the top to the bottom, from the door (of the Masjid) to the Miḥrāb, all of us are unaware of

the times in which we are living. We are simply sitting down, unaware of our surroundings, dozing off. One time we are accosted that, for example, this land must be divided up and that the land must be cleaned and tilled (to make use of it). Unknowingly, it is as if this issue (in relation to the cleaning and tilling of the land) launches an offensive upon us since we are completely unaware of the time in which we are living. We do not have the foresight or speculation of what would happen in the future and have not planned anything to determine what our responsibilities will be or what we should be doing.

We in reality, do not know what is going on in this world and what is being done beyond the curtains. We have suddenly faced the issue of womens' social rights. Here, we don't have enough time to think over it and analyze all of its aspects in order to determine its importance. Are those who are defending the social rights of women really serious? Do they really want to attract more fans? Or is there another benefit that they intend to gain from arousing such questions? Along with these, there will come other doubtful and unknown matters that we do not know.

Some sixty to one hundred years ago among the other Islāmic countries, the issue of guiding and leading the youth had been brought up, but they have been busier in pondering and discussing this issue than we were.

What Must be Done?

That which is even more important than charting a program for the leadership of this generation is that we must strengthen the belief in our own minds that the issue of leadership and guidance of this generation is different in its methods and techniques throughout the various time periods, and differs according to the groups or people whom we are working with. Thus, we must completely remove the thought from our heads that this new generation must be guided by following the methods used by the previous generations.

First of all, we must fully understand this young generation and comprehend what sorts of peculiarities and distinctions they possess. In relation to this generation, there are two modes of thought that are common, and usually, there are two ways that they can be dealt with.

From the point of view of some people, these youth are an insensitive and rude group of people who have been deluded and enraptured by their own lower desires. They are worshippers of the self and possess thousands of (other) deficiencies. These people (who think this of the younger generation) are constantly making faces at them and are always speaking bad of this new generation.

However, the youth see themselves as the complete opposite of this picture. The youth do not see themselves as having any deficiencies. They imagine themselves to be the effigy of intelligence, the effigy of sagacity, the effigy of higher qualities. The older generation thinks that this group have fallen into disbelief and that they are plunged in to sin, while the new generation think that the older generation are simple minded and ignorant.

The older generation tells the newer ones that they have lowered themselves to the worship of their own selves and have become disbelievers, while the new generation tells the older one that they do not know what they are talking about and that they do not understand them! Generally speaking of course, it is possible that one generation may consider the previous generation as being righteous people but it is also possible that they may consider them as being misguided.

An Example of Two Generations

There is a verse in Sūratul Aḥqāf that was recited before I began my discussion. In my opinion, this verse actually portrays the scene of two generations – that of a righteous generation and the

other of a generation that has gone astray. We cannot say that without a doubt every proceeding generation would be more corrupt than the previous generation and that the world is going closer towards corruption day after day. At the same time, we also cannot say that the future generations will be more perfect than the previous generations and will never fall into error.

The verses that we wanted to look at are as follows:

﴿ وَوَصَّيْنَا ٱلْإِنسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ
كُرْهًا وَوَضَعَتْهُ كُرْهًا وَحَمْلُهُ وَفِصَالُهُ ثَلَاثُونَ
شَهْرًا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَبَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً قَالَ
رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ ٱلَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ
عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَٰلِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ
وَأَصْلِحْ لِي فِي ذُرِّيَّتِي إِنِّي تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنِّي مِنَ
ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴾

"And We have enjoined on mankind kindness to his parents. In pain did his mother bear him and in pain she gave him bith. The carrying of the (child) to his weaning is (a period of) thirty months. At length when the child reaches the age of full strength and attains forty years he says: 'O my Lord! grant me that I may be grateful for Your favours which You have bestowed upon me and upon both my parents and that I may work righteousness such as You may approve; and be gracious to me in my

> *progeny. Truly I have turned to You and truly I am of the Muslims."*[18]

This verse of the Qurʾān presents us with one of the ways of thinking and understanding of a righteous generation. It has been said that this verse was revealed in relation to Sayyid ash-Shuhadā Imām Ḥusain ibne ʿAlī ﷷ - of course, he is simply the most perfect testimony of this verse, however the verse is a general all-encompassing verse.

In this verse, there are five characteristics which have been mentioned for a righteous generation.

The first characteristic is that of a soul which is thankful and realizes the importance and worth of the blessing and gift of creation:

﴿ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ ٱلَّتِي ﴾

> *"…'O my Lord! grant me that I may be grateful for Your favours which You have bestowed upon me…"*

Such a person looks at all of the blessings and bounties that Allāh ﷻ has given to both of them (the mother and father) and the previous generations and then says, "O' Allāh! Give me the strength to be able to discern the truth and realize its true worth. Give me the strength to be able to make the best use of the blessings that You have showered upon us such that would earn Your pleasure." To be thankful for any blessing means that we make use of that blessing as it should be used.

After this, we pray that Allāh ﷻ should give us the ability to perform actions that He is pleased with. We pray that we too should be given the chance to act in a way that is beneficial to

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[18] Sūrah al-Aḥqāf (46), Verse 15

ourselves, to others and perform those things which would earn the pleasure of Allāh ﷻ:

﴿ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ ﴾

"…and that I may work righteousness such as You may approve…"

The third prayer is that we turn our attention to the future generation and ask Allāh ﷻ for their goodness and for them to be righteous:

﴿ وَأَصْلِحْ لِي فِي ذُرِّيَّتِي ﴾

"…and be gracious to through my progeny…"

The fourth request made is that we are permitted to turn back towards Allāh ﷻ for the mistakes, slips and shortcomings which we performed in the past:

﴿ إِنِّي تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ ﴾

"…Truly I have turned to You…"

The fifth and final prayer in this verse is that we ask to be granted the state of submission to the Truth and those things which Allāh ﷻ has specified for us in relation to the natural world and the Islāmic legislations. It is through transgressing the limits set by Allāh ﷻ that leads to our destruction and annihilation:

﴿ وَإِنِّي مِنَ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴾

"…and truly I am of the Muslims."[19]

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[19] Sūratul Aḥqāf (46), Verse 15

In relation to this generation mentioned above, it is then mentioned in the Qurʾān:

﴿ أُوْلَئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ نَتَقَبَّلُ عَنْهُمْ أَحْسَنَ مَا عَمِلُوا وَنَتَجَاوَزُ عَن سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ فِي أَصْحَابِ ٱلْجَنَّةِ وَعْدَ ٱلصِّدْقِ ٱلَّذِي كَانُوا يُوعَدُونَ ﴾

"These are they from whom We accept the best of what they have done and pass over their evil deeds, among the dwellers of the garden; the promise of truth which they were promised."[20]

In this part of the verse, the tense changes to the plural form and thus it is clear that it is not in reference to one individual. In this verse, it is stated that, "Such are they from whom We shall accept the best of their deeds and pass by their ill deeds: (they shall be) among the Companions of the Garden: a promise of truth which was made to them (in this life)."

However the following verse is in relation to the corrupt, misled generation, and it states:

﴿ وَٱلَّذِي قَالَ لِوَالِدَيْهِ أُفٍّ لَّكُمَا أَتَعِدَانِنِي أَنْ أُخْرَجَ وَقَدْ خَلَتْ ٱلْقُرُونُ مِن قَبْلِي وَهُمَا يَسْتَغِيثَانِ ٱللَّهَ وَيْلَكَ آمِنْ إِنَّ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقٌّ فَيَقُولُ مَا هَذَا إِلاَّ أَسَاطِيرُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴾

"But (there is one) who says to his parents 'Woe on you! Do you hold out the promise to me that I shall be raised up even though

[20] Sūratul Aḥqāf (46), Verse 16

> *generations have passed before me (without rising again)?' And the two of them (the mother and father) seek Allāh's aid (and rebuke the son saying): 'Woe to you! Have faith for the promise of Allāh is true.' But he says 'This is nothing but tales of the ancients!'"*[21]

A conceited, perplexed and mentally undeveloped generation would learn a few things, and then would not believe anything else that they hear; thus they would cease being servants of Allāh ﷻ. They would say to their father and mother, *"Woe upon you!"* They would make fun of their parents and would resort to laughing at their thoughts and beliefs. Such a generation would say to their them!

﴿ أَتَعِدَانِنِي أَنْ أُخْرَجَ ﴾

> *"Do you hold out the promise to me that I shall be raised up?"*

Such a generation exclaims: "Do you expect me to believe that there is another world after this one or that there is another life after this one whereas we see that previous generations came, lived, died and that is it!?"

The father and mother are religious and are not prepared to hear anything that goes against their religion and faith, however at the same time, they see that the dearest of people to them is speaking to them in such a way that it makes them upset and forces them to say to their child:

﴿ وَيْلَكَ آمِنْ إِنَّ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقٌّ ﴾

"Woe to you! Have faith for the promise of Allāh is true!"

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[21] Ibid., Verse 17

One of the most painful things for a religious father and mother to see is their dear child drifting towards disbelief of the religion, or to see him or her deny the beliefs and go towards Kufr (complete disbelief).

﴿ وَهُمَا يَسْتَغِيثَانِ ٱللَّهَ ﴾

"…and the two of them (the mother and father) seek Allāh's aid…"

It is at this time that the cry for help can be heard in the heavens when both the father and mother call upon Allāh ﷻ. However, the child replies to their pleas by saying that:

﴿ مَا هَذَا إِلاَّ أَسَاطِيرُ ٱلأَوَّلِينَ ﴾

"This is nothing but the tales of the ancients!"

This verse gives us a picture of two completely different generations. One verse shows us a righteous generation, while the other verse gives us the image of a corrupt generation.

With this said, let us see which group our young generation falls under.

The Youth of Today

Our young generation of today has both good qualities and some deficiencies in them. This generation has a series of understandings and emotions that the previous generations did not possess and therefore, we must always give them the benefit of the doubt.

At the same time, they also have some corrupt thoughts and negative ethical traits which must be removed from their character. It is not possible to remove these traits from them without keeping in mind and respecting the good qualities that

the youth possess – meaning their understandings, emotions and their other noble traits and qualities – thus, we must show respect to them in these regards.

There is no dead end in life. In the previous generations, the thoughts and minds of the people were not as open as the generation of today. These emotions and good qualities were not present in the people of the past, and thus we must show respect to the youth for their noble qualities – and it is Islām itself which has shown respect to these traits.

If we do not wish to pay attention to these issues, then it is impossible to think that we will be able to take charge and remove the intellectual perversions and the negative ethical traits from the future generations.

The method that we have presently taken in the face of this generation is that of making faces at them, criticizing them, and slandering them. We are continuously crying out to them that the movie cinemas are like this, the theatres are such, the guest houses that exist between Shamirān and Tehran (two cities in Iran) are such and such; the dance halls are like this, the swimming pools are such and thus we continuously cry out (about the corruption in all of these places) and we must know that this is not the correct method to follow. We must return back to the original reason for the corruption found in these places (and why this new generation should not go to these places).

The Difficulties of This Generation Must be Understood

Our main focus and concentration is that we must first identify where the pains of this generation lie. We must identify the intellectual pains, the academic pains – those pains that would point us to them being aware (of their responsibilities) – meaning

those things which trouble the youth of today which did not trouble the youth of the past.

In these regards, the poet Mawlawī, has stated:

حسرت وزاری که در بیماری است

وقت بیماری هم از بیداری است

هر که او بیدارتر پردردتر

هر که او هشیارتر رخ زردتر

"Remorse and humility occur at the time of illness: the time of illness is wholly wakefulness (of conscience). The more wakeful any one is, the more full of suffering he is; the more aware (of God) he is, the paler he is in countenance."

In the past, the doors to the events (happening around the world) were closed to people – when the doors are closed to the people, then life is easy – the windows too were closed. Thus, no one knew what was happening outside (of their own home). No one knew what was happening outside of their own city. They did not even know what was happening in other countries. Today, these doors and windows (to other cities and countries) are wide open.

Today, the people are able to see the entire world and the advancements that the world has made. They see the knowledge of the world; they see the economic powers around the world; they see the political and military powers of the world; they can see the Democracies of the world; they see the equality that is taking shape around the world; they see the various movements, uprisings and revolutions taking place in the world. The youth are seeing these things, thus, their emotions run high, and they have a right to see these things and to think for themselves and

then say: *"Why have we been left behind (in the face of all of these advancements)?"*

In the words of a poet:

سخن درست بگویم نمی توانم دید

که می خورند حریفان و من نظاره کنم

"I must speak the truth that I cannot stand to see,
My opponents living well while I simply watch on."

In this way, the world is moving forward towards political, economic and social freedom and is moving towards greatness, splendor, honour and freedom however we are still asleep or are witnessing this movement from far and are yawning away.

The previous generations did not understand all of these things and could not discern them, however the new generation has a right to say: *"Why is it that Japan, which is a country of idol worshippers, and Iran which is an Islāmic country within the same year and same time period of existence, realize the need and have developed a new civilization and industry. However we see that Japan was able to reach to a level where they are very easily able to compete with the Western nations, whereas we see the condition that Iran is in?!"*

ما و لیلی همسفر بودیم اندر راه عشق

او به مطلبها رسید و ما هنوز آواره ایم

"Laylā and I were traveling together on the path of love, She reached to that what she was searching for, while I still have yet to get there."

Does this new generation not have the right to ask such questions?

The previous generations did not have the heavy weight of foreign interference bearing down upon their shoulders that this current generation is experiencing.

Is this a sin? Of course not! This is not a sin! Rather, experiencing this is actually a heavenly message from Allāh ﷻ. If this feeling and experience was not there, then this would have been a sign that we are the target of the punishment and chastisement (of Allāh ﷻ).

So then, now that this feeling is present, this means that Allāh ﷻ wants to grant us salvation from this chastisement.

In the past, the level of intelligence of the people was low and very few people entertained doubts, confusion and questions (about the religion), however this mode of thinking has now changed and people are asking more and more questions. It is natural that when intelligence increases, then questions would also be raised in the minds of the people that were not thought of previously, and these doubts and confusions must be removed from the minds of the people and the questions that they pose and the needs of their intelligence must be answered.

It is not possible that you can say to such a person that he should forget his questions and just return to how the previous generations were – rather, this is a very good opportunity to acquaint the people with the truth and teachings of Islām. It is not possible to explain the truth to an ignorant, illiterate person and thus, in regards to the guidance and leadership of the previous generation whose level of thought was low, it was necessary for us to express the religion and convey it to them in a particular way through a particular form of writing. However today, that old form of propagation and that old form of writing has absolutely no worth or value.

We must, and this is absolutely necessary, reform ourselves and have a deep restructuring in this part of our actions. We must be

well acquainted with the logic, thinking and language of the day and must work for the guidance and leadership of the people in this manner.

The level of intelligence of the past generation was so low that if in a gathering, a person was to speak things that went against other things that he said (in the same gathering), then no one would have noticed or complained about this. However today, if a young adult who is in the 10th or 12th grade were to go and sit at the feet of the mimbar of a lecturer, he would be able to pick up five or six, maybe even more problems with the lecture. We must pay attention to their thoughts and intelligence and thus, we can no longer tell them to be quiet and stop wasting time.

As you know, it was not this way in the past. In the past, a person could recite a thousand lines of poetry in one sitting or other words of praise that were completely opposite of one another and not a single person would have understood that what the person was saying was going against his own words! For example, a person would first say that no action can take place without a cause:

أَبَــــىٰ ٱللَّهُ أَنْ يَجْرِىَ ٱلْأُمُورَ إِلاَّ بَأَسْبَابِهَا

"Allāh is much greater than that He would perform actions except for a cause."

The person would state this fact and everyone would agree with him and if right after saying this, he were to say:

إِذَا جَــــاءَ ٱلْقَدَرُ عَمِيَ ٱلْبَصَرُ

"When fate comes the eyes are blinded."

Once again, everybody supported this claim and confirmed its reality!

There is a story that when the King of Nishābūr[22] had come to Tehrān, a great number of people gathered around him at the base of the mimbar due to the beautiful voice that he had. A prominent leader of the community said to him, "Seeing as how such a great number of people have gathered at the feet of the mimbar when you speak, why don't articulate a few rational words to them and stop wasting their time?"

The King replied, "These people do not have the ability to understand rational speech. Rational words can only be spoken to people who have intelligence and these people do not posses any intelligence!" The leader replied that the King was wrong in his synopsis and it was not as he said. The King retorted that it was exactly how he said and that he would prove it to the leader.

One day when the leader was in the audience, the King started to speak on the mimbar about the tragedies that befell the Ahlul Baīt ﻋﻠﻴﻬﻢ ﺍﻟﺴﻼﻡ in the city of Kufah, Iraq. He recited some poetry in a beautiful, sorrowful voice which made the people break into tears. He then said, "Be calm, be calm, be calm." After everyone calmed and quieted down he said, "I would like to describe to you the scene of the children of Abī ʿAbdillāh ﻋﻠﻴﻪ ﺍﻟﺴﻼﻡ while in the city of Kufah. When the Ahlul Baīt ﻋﻠﻴﻬﻢ ﺍﻟﺴﻼﻡ entered into the city of Kufah, the weather was so hot. The sun was beating down upon them so much that it felt like fire was being placed above their heads. The young children of the family were all thirsty and because of the intense heat, they were very hot. They were then put onto saddle-less camels and since the ground was full of ice the camels kept slipping on the ice and thus, the young children fell off of the camel onto the ground and started crying: "واعطشاه" (O' we are thirsty!)"

[22] A city just outside of present day Mashhad, Iran. (tr.)

Reasons Why People Gravitate Towards Atheism

Incidentally, there are other people who have been able to recognize the things which pain this generation and have been able to misuse these youth and misguide them. What path did the teachings of materialism - which have even appeared in this country (Irān) – use which were able to make people sacrifice their lives for these things and for the purpose of atheism?

They used this same path (that we are after) since they knew that this generation was in need of something. They knew that they needed a school of thought which would be able to answer their questions, and thus they presented such a thought ideology to them. They knew that this generation possessed a series of great societal ideals and aims which they wanted to reach and wanted these things to prove true for themselves and thus, these materialists made these their same ideals and aims. Thus, they were able to pull many people towards themselves and with what sort of self sacrifices (on their part) and what kind of closeness!

When a person is found to have a serious need for something, he does not really think of the good and bad in that thing. When the stomach is hungry for food, it does not really pay attention to the type of food it gets – it will eat whatever it finds simply to satisfy the hunger. The soul is the same way – if it reaches to a stage that it is hungry for a school of thought to follow and such a school which is run on some predefined and known principles which is able to answer the questions brought forth and is able to tackle all of the issues of the monotonous world and the societal issues which are placed in front of it, then it will not care if the beliefs are based on strong logic or not. Thus we see that humanity is not really after firm and logical speech – rather, it is after an organized and well-prepared thought which would be able to answer all of the day to day questions that come forth.

We, the philosophers, knew that all these words were nonsense, and although it was meaningless, the aforesaid philosophy was in fact a demanding exigency which filled a vacancy and saved a room for its place, and thus it was accepted.

Signs of Intellectual Development

After a child passes through the stage of being breast-fed and the power of his brain and the powers of discernment have developed, he then starts to ask questions about the things around him and we must be ready to answer his questions according to his level of understanding. We must not say to him, "Do not be nosy" or "What is it to you?" or things such as this. The child asking questions is a sign that his brain is developing and that he is thinking. These questions also show that his spiritual powers have developed and have taken a firm hold within him. These questions are a natural sign; they are a sign of creation. The creation announces to others that it constantly needs something new within itself and thus, those people who are around the child must give him what he asks for.

The same thing can be said for society. If within society, a new feeling or understanding is brought forth, then this too is a sign of development and progress of the society. This is also a sign that the elements within the society have a new need which much be met. These types of things must be shown as things which are different from the low desires and the need of worshipping the self, and thus we should never assume that these questions are some how a form of following the lower desires. Thus, when these things come about, we must immediately keep in mind the following verse of the Qur'ān:

﴿ إِنْ تُطِعْ أَكْثَرَ مَنْ فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ يُضِلُّوكَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ﴾

> *"If you were to follow a majority of the people on the Earth then they would definitely misguide you from the path of Allāh."*[23]

In addition, we read:

﴿ وَ لَوِ ٱتَّبَعَ ٱلْحَقُّ أَهْـــــوَائَهُمْ لَفَسَدَتِ ٱلسَّمٰوٰاتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ﴾

> *"And if you were to follow their lower desires instead of the Ḥaqq (Truth), then surely the Heavens and the Earth would have become corrupt."*[24]

The Abandonment of the Qurʾān

Today, we have a complaint that we must address to this new generation which is: Why are they not acquainted with the Qurʾān? Why are they not being taught the Qurʾān in their schools? Even if we go to the Universities, we see that the (Muslim) university students cannot even recite the Qurʾān! Of course it is unfortunate that this has occurred however we must ask ourselves, "What steps have we taken to help them in this path?"

Do we assume that with the lessons of Fiqh, Sharīʿah and Qurʾān which are being taught in the Islāmic schools (Madāris) that this is enough for the new generation to become completely acquainted with the Qurʾān?

What is more amazing is that the previous generations were also distanced from and had abandoned the Qurʾān – and then we wish to complain to the new generation why they have not

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[23] Sūratul Anʿām (6), Verse 116
[24] Sūratul Mo'minūn (23), Verse 71

developed a relationship with the Qurʾān!? Without doubt, the Qurʾān has truly been alienated from ourselves and then we still expect the new generation to hold onto the Qurʾān!?

At this point, we will prove to the readers how we have alienated ourselves from this Sacred Book.

If a person's knowledge is that of the science of the Qurʾān - meaning that he does a lot of contemplation upon the contents of the Qurʾān and if he knows the complete interpretation of the Qurʾān, how much respect would such a person have amongst us? None. However, if a person was to know "Kifāyah"[25] of Akhūnd Mullāh Kādhim Khurāsānī, then he would be respected and would be considered as one with integrity.

Thus, the Qurʾān is truly unknown and has become distanced from us and this is the same complaint that the Qurʾān itself will proclaim!

We are all included in the protests and objections of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ when he complains to Allāh ﷻ:

﴿ يَا رَبِّ إِنَّ قَوْمِي ٱتَّخَذُوا هٰذَا ٱلْقُرآنَ مَهْجُوراً ﴾

"O' my Lord! Surely MY nation took this Qurʾān as something trivial."[26]

Approximately one month ago[27], one of our own great scholars had gone to the holy cities (in ʿIrāq) and narrates that he visited Ayatullāh Khūʿī ؒ. He said to the Ayatullāh, "Why have you stopped the lessons in Tafsīr which you were previously

[25] This is one of the major books in the field of Usūlul Fiqh that students of the Theological Seminary need to study as they progress in their studies to reach the highest level of learning – Baʿthul Khārij. (Tr.)

[26] Sūrah al-Furqān (25), Verse 30

[27] From when this lecture was originally given in 1963. (Tr.)

giving?"[28] The Ayatullāh replied to him that there were many obstacles and difficulties in offering classes on Tafsīr of the Qurʾān. This scholar then told Ayatullāh Khūʿī ﵀, "ʿAllāmah Tabā'tabā'ī ﵀ has continued his classes on Tafsīr of the Qurʾān in Qum and thus, most of his time is spent in this area of study and research." Ayatullāh Khūʿī replied, "Ayatullāh Tabā'tabā'ī has sacrificed himself – he has withdrawn himself from the society" - and he is right.

It is amazing that in the most sensitive issues of the religion, if we see a person who sacrifices his entire life to study the Qurʾān, then he will fall into thousands of difficulties and problems from the point of view of his food, overall life, his character (within the society), his respect and he will be removed from and deprived of many things. However, if he was to spend his entire life in the study of books such as "Kifāyah", then he would be worthy of receiving everything!

Thus, in summary, we can find thousands of people who know "Kifāyah" very well. They also know the replies to the points brought up in "Kifāyah" and they even know the replies to the replies that have been given - and they even know the replies to the replies of the replies of "Kifāyah" however we cannot find even two people who know the Qurʾān properly! If you ask any scholar about a verse of the Qurʾān, they will say that they must go back and refer to the Tafsīr of the Qurʾān.

What is even more amazing than this is that the older generation has acted in this regards to the Qurʾān, however we had higher hopes that the new generation of the youth would be able to read the Qurʾān, understand it and act upon it!

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[28] It has been narrated that Āyatullāh Khūʿī was offering classes in Tafsīr of the Qurʾān some 8 or 9 years ago in Najaf, some of which were also printed in book form.

If the previous generations had not strayed away from the Qurʾān, then without doubt, this new generation too would not have been led astray from the path of the Qurʾān. Thus, it is ourselves who have acted in this way to earn the wrath and curse of the Prophet ﷺ and the Qurʾān.

In relation to the Qurʾān, the Noble Messenger ﷺ has stated:

إِنَّهُ شَافِعٌ مُشَفَّعٌ وَ مَاحِلٌ مُصَدَّقٌ

By this we mean that in the presence of Allāh ﷻ, the Qurʾān is an intercessor and its intercession will be accepted and in relation to those people who ignore the Qurʾān, it will complain (to Allāh ﷻ) and its complaints will be accepted as well.[29]

It is both the older generation and even the newer generation who have done an injustice to the Qurʾān and continue to do so. It is the previous generation who had initiated this act of ignoring the Qurʾān, and it is the newer generation who are continuing in their footsteps.

This in conclusion, in the issue of the leadership of the youth, more than anything else, there are two things which we must do:

1) We must first recognize that which is troubling this generation. Once we have done this, then we can sit and think of the cure and remedy for their problems, since without knowing what is troubling them, it is not possible to go forth and cure the illness.

2) The second thing is that the older generation must first correct themselves. The older generation must ask forgiveness for the greatest sin which they have committed and that is that they have left and ignored the Qurʾān. We must all return back to this

[29] al-Kāfī, Volume 2, Page 599

Qurʾān and place the Qurʾān in front of us and then march forward under the shadow of the guidance of the Qurʾān so that we will be able to reach to happiness and perfection. ❁

ألشـــــباب

THE YOUTH

١) قال رسول اللّه صلّى اللّه عليه وآله و سلّم: ألشباب شعبة مـــن الجنون.

1. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said: "The period of the youth is from the stages of obsession."[30]

٢) قال الإمام عليّ عليه السّلام: جهل الشاب معذور وعلمه محقور.

2. Imām ʿAlī ibne Abī Ṭālib ؑ has said: "The ignorance of the young person is excusable and his knowledge is limited."[31]

٣) قال الإمام عليّ عليه السّلام: شيئان لا يعرف فضلهما إلاّ مـــن فقدهما: ألشّباب والعافية.

3. Imām ʿAlī ibne Abī Ṭālib ؑ has said: "There are two things which people do not recognize the greatness of until they lose them: their youth and good health."[32]

٤) قال رسول اللّه صلى اللّه عليه وآله و سلّم: خير شـــبابكم مـــن تشبّه بكهولكم وشرّ كهولكم من تشبّه بشبابكم.

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[30] Al-Ikhtiṣāṣ, Page 343
[31] Ghururul Ḥikm, Ḥadīth 4768
[32] Ibid., Ḥadīth 5764

4. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said: "The best of your youth are those who resemble your old people[33] and the worst of your old people are those who resemble your young people."[34]

٥) قال الإمام الصادق عليه السّلام: وصيّة ورقة بن نوفل لخديجة بنت خويلد إذا دخل عليها يقول لها: إعلمي أن الشّاب الحسن الخلق مفتاح للخير مغلاق للشرّ، وأن الشّاب الشحيح الخلق مغلاق للخير مفتاح للشرّ.

5. Imām Jaʿfar ibne Muḥammad as-Ṣādiq ؑ has said: "Any time Waraqah ibne Nawfil would go to see Khadījah binte Khuwaylīd, he would advise her as such, 'You should know that surely the young person who has good behaviour is the key to all goodness and is kept away from all evil, while the young person who has

[33] You should know that people are of two categories of which the one category is the young person who has distanced himself from following the desires of his lower passions and is distanced from the ignorance which is accompanied by the period of the youth. He has a desire to gravitate towards goodness and to distance himself from bad traits and it is in regards to this type of youth that the Messenger of Allāh (blessings of Allāh be upon him and his family) has said:

يعجب ربك من شاب ليست له صبوة

"Your Lord is amazed to see a young person who has distanced himself from following the desires of his lower passions and is distanced from the ignorance which is accompanied by the period of the youth."

[34] Kanzul ʿUmmāl, Ḥadīth 43058

bad behaviour is kept away from all goodness and is the key to all evil."[35]

٦) قال الإمام عليّ عليه السّلام: إعلموا رحمكم اللّه أنّكم في زمـــان القائل فيه الحق قليل....فتاهم عارم، وشـــائبهم آثم، وعالــــــمهم منافق.

6. Imām ʿAlī ibne Abī Ṭālib ﷺ has said: "You should know that, may Allāh have mercy upon you, surely you are living in a time in which those who profess to be on the Truth are very few in number … their youth are obstinate, their young people are sinners, and their scholars are hypocrites."[36]

[35] Amāli of al-Ṭūsī, Page 302 and 598
[36] Nahjul Balāgha, Sermon 233

تربية الأحداث

TRAINING OF THE YOUTH

٧) قال الإمام عليّ عليه السّلام: إنّما قلب الحدث كالأرض الخالية، ما القي فيها من شيء إلاّ قبلته.

7. Imām ʿAlī ibne Abī Ṭālib عليه السلام has said: "Surely the heart of the youth is like the uncultivated ground – it will accept whatever you throw upon it [and that is what will grow from it]."[37]

٨) قال الإمام الصّادق عليه السّلام: - للأحول -: أتيت البصرة؟ قال: نعم. قال: كيف رأيت مسارعة النّاس في هذا الأمر ودخولهم فيه؟ فقال: واللّه إنهم لقليل، وقد فعلوا وإن ذالك لقليل. فقال (عليه السّلام): عليك بالأحداث؛ فإنهم أسرع إلى كلّ خير.

8. Imām Jaʿfar ibne Muḥammad as-Ṣādiq عليه السلام said to a companion named Al-Aḥwal: "'Have you been to Baṣrah?' The man replied, 'Yes.' The Imām عليه السلام then asked him, 'How did you find the enthusiasm of the people in regards to this issue [of the Wilāyah and Imāmate of the Ahlul Baīt] and their acceptance of it?' The man replied, 'I swear by Allāh surely those people [who follow and accept this] are few in number. They work upon this [propagating this belief to others, even though they are small in number.' The Imām replied to him, 'I advise you to work on the

[37] Tuḥaful ʿUqūl, Page 70

youth [in educating them on these issues] since surely they are quicker to accept all good things.'"[38]

[38] Qurbul Isnād, Page 128 and 450

التعلم في الشباب

SEEKING KNOWLEDGE WHILE A YOUTH

٩) قال رسول اللّه صلى اللّه عليه وآله و سلَم: من تعلّم في شبابه كان بمنزلة الرسم في الحجر، ومن تعلّم وهو كبير كان بمنزلة الكتاب على وجه الماء.

9. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said: "The person who seeks knowledge while in his youth is similar to the act of inscribing something upon a rock; while the person who seeks knowledge while he is old is similar to the act of writing something upon the water."[39]

١٠) قال الإمام عليّ عليه السّلام: العلم من الصغر كالنقش في الحجر.

10. Imām ʿAlī ibne Abī Ṭālib عليه السلام has said: "Gaining knowledge in one's youth is like imprinting something on a rock [it will always remain]."[40]

١١) قال رسول اللّه صلى اللّه عليه وآله و سلّم: من لم يطلب العلم صغيرا فطلبه كبيرا فمات، مات شهيدا.

11. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said: "If a person who does not seek knowledge while he is youth, but rather goes to seek it

[39] Biḥārul Anwār, Volume 1, Page 222, Ḥadīth 6 & Page 224, Ḥadīth 13
[40] Ibid.,

when he becomes old and dies in this state, he dies as a martyr [Shahīd]."[41]

١٢) قال النبي أيّوب عليه السّلام: إن اللّه يزرع الحكمة في قلب الصغير والكبير، فإذا جعل اللّه العبد حكيما في الصبى لم يضع منزلته عند الحكماء حداثة سنّه وهم يرون عليه من اللّه نور كرامته.

12. The Prophet Ayyūb ﵇ has said: "Surely Allāh implants wisdom [Al-Ḥikmah] in the heart of the young person and the old person. So then if Allāh makes a servant a wise person in his youth then he would not lower his status in the eyes of the intellectuals simply because he is of a young age since they will see the nūr (divine light) of Allāh radiating from this person."[42]

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[41] Kanzul ʿUmmāl, Ḥadīth 28843
[42] Tanbīyatul Khawāṭir, Page 37

الشّاب وترك التعلّم

THE YOUNG PERSON AND REFRAINING FROM SEEKING KNOWLEDGE

١٣) قال الإمام الكاظم عليه السّلام: لو وجدت شابّاً من شبّان الشيعة لا يتفقه لضربته ضربة بالسيف.

13. Imām Mūsā ibne Jaʿfar al-Kādhim ﷺ has said: "If I was to find a youth from amongst the youth of the Shīʿa not gaining a deep knowledge and understanding, I would surely strike him with a sword."[43]

١٤) قال الإمام الباقر عليه السّلام: لو أُتيت بشاب من شباب الشيعة لا يتفقه (في الدين) لأدبته.

14. Imām Muḥammad ibne ʿAlī al-Bāqir ﷺ has said: "If I were to find a youth from amongst the youth of the Shīʿa that was not engaged in gaining a deep knowledge and understanding [of the religion] I would seriously reprimand him."[44]

١٥) قال الإمام الصّادق عليه السّلام: لستُ أُحب أن أرى الشاب منكم إلاّ غاديا في حالين: إمّا عالما أو متعلما. فإن لم يفعل فرّط، فإنّ فرّط ضيّع, فإنّ ضيّع أثم، وإنْ أثم سكن النار والّذي بعث محمّدا بالحق.

[43] Fiqhul Riḍā, Page 337
[44] Al-Maḥāsin, Volume 1, Pages 357 and 760

15. Imām Jaʿfar ibne Muḥammad as-Ṣādiq عليه السلام has said: "I do not like to see the youth from amongst yourselves except that he/she is passing the life in one of two states: either as a scholar or as a student. So then if he is not in one of these two states then he is one who has wasted (something) and surely the one who wastes is one who has squandered something and surely the act of squandering is a sin and the person who commits a sin shall reside in the Hell Fire – I swear by the one who appointed Muḥammad with The Truth."[45]

[45] Amālī of Al-Ṭūṣī, Pages 303 and 604

فضل الشاب العابد

THE GREATNESS OF A YOUNG PERSON WHO WORSHIPS [ALLĀH]

١٦) قال رسول اللّه صلى اللّه عليه وآله و سلّم: إنّ اللّه تعالى يحب الشاب التائب.

16. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said: "Surely Allāh, the High, loves the young person who is repents [for his sins]."[46]

١٧) قال رسول اللّه صلى اللّه عليه وآله و سلّم: ما من شيء أحب إلى اللّه تعالى من شاب تائب، وما من شيء أبغض إلى اللّه تعالى من شيخ مقيم على معاصيه.

17. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said: "There is nothing more beloved to Allāh, the High, than a young person who repents (for his sins); and there is nothing more detested in the sight of Allāh, the High, than an old person who perpetuates in disobeying Him."[47]

١٨) قال رسول اللّه صلى اللّه عليه وآله و سلّم: إنّ اللّه تعالى يباهي بالشابّ العابد الـــملائكة، يقول: أنظروا إلى عبدي! ترك شهوته من أجلي.

18. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said: "Surely Allāh, The High, boasts to the Angels in regards to the young person who is a

[46] Kanzul ʿUmmāl, Ḥadīth 10185

[47] Ibid., Ḥadīth 10233

servant (of His) and He says, 'Look towards my servant! He has refrained from following his lowly desires for My sake alone.'"[48]

١٩) قال رسول اللّه صلى اللّه عليه وآله و سلّم: فضل الشاب العابد الذي تعبّد في صباه على الشيخ الذي تعبّد بعد ما كبرت سنّه كفضل الـــمرسلين على سائر الناس.

19. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said: "The greatness of the worshipper of Allāh who is a youth and who worships Allāh while in the stage of his youth over the old person who worships [Allāh] after he has become of old age is like the greatness of the deputed ones [the Prophets and Messengers] over all other creations."[49]

٢٠) قال رسول اللّه صلى اللّه عليه وآله و سلّم: سبعة في ظلّ عرش اللّه عزّ وجلّ يوم لا ظلّ إلاّ ظلّه: إمام عادل، وشاب نشأ في عبـــادة اللّه عزّ وجلّ.

20. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said: "There are seven individuals who shall be protected under the shade of the Throne [Power] of Allāh, the Noble and Grand on the day when there shall be no shade except for His shade: the just leader … and the youth who spent his time in the worship of Allāh, the Noble and Grand."[50]

[48] Ibid., Ḥadīth 43057
[49] Kanzul 'Ummāl, Ḥadīth 43059
[50] Al-Khisāl, Page 343, Ḥadīth 8

فضل من أفنى شبابه في طاعة الله

THE GREATNESS OF THE PERSON WHO SPENDS HIS YOUTH IN THE OBEDIENCE TO ALLĀH

٢١) قال رسول اللّه صلى اللّه عليه وآله و سلّم: ما من شاب يدع للّه الدنيا ولـــهوها وأهرم شبابه في طاعة الله إلاّ أعطاه اللّه أجر إثنين وسبعين صدّيقاً.

21. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said: "There is not a single young person who turns away from the transient world and its pleasures only for the [pleasure] of Allāh and spends his youth in the obedience of Allāh until he reaches to old age, except that Allāh would grant him the reward of seventy-two truthful [and righteous] people."[51]

٢٢) قال رسول اللّه صلى اللّه عليه وآله و سلّم: إنّ أحب الخلائـــق إلى اللّه عزّ وجلّ شاب حدث السن في صورة حسنة جعل شـــبابه وجماله للّه وفي طاعته، ذلك الذي يباهي به الرحمن ملائكته, يقول: هذا عبدي حقّا.

22. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said: "Surely the most beloved of the creations to Allāh, the Noble and Grand, is the youth who is young in age and who is a very handsome/beautiful individual however he places his youth and his beauty in Allāh and in His obedience alone. This is the thing for which the Most

[51] Makārimul Akhlāq, Volume 2, Page 373

Merciful [Al-Raḥmān] boasts to His Angels about and says, 'This is truly my servant.'"[52]

٢٣) قال رسول اللّه صلى اللّه عليه وآله و سلّم: إنّ اللّـــه يحـــب الشاب الذي يفني شبابه في طاعة اللّه تعالى.

23. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said: "Surely Allāh loves that young person who spends his youth in the obedience of Allāh, the Most High."[53]

٢٤) قال النبي إبراهيم عليه السلام: لمـــا أصبح فرأى في لحيته شيبا – شعرة بيضاء – : ألحمد للّه ربّ العالـــمين الذي بلغني هذا المبلغ ولـــم أعص اللّه طرفة عين.

24. It has been narrated about Prophet Ibrāhīm ﷺ that one day he woke up and saw a white hair in his beard and said: "All praise belongs to Allāh, the Lord of the entire universe who has made me reach to this stage in my life in which I have not disobeyed Allāh for as much as the twinkling of the eye."[54]

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52 Kanzul ʿUmmāl, Ḥadīth 43103
53 Kanzul ʿUmmāl, Ḥadīth 43060
54 Illulush Sharāʿiyah, Volume 2, Page 104, Ḥadīth 2

تفسير الفتى

THE DEFINITION OF A YOUTH [AL-FATĀ]

٢٥) قال الإمام الصّادق عليه السّلام: لسليمان بن جعفر الــــهذلي – : يا سليمان من الفتى؟ قال: قلت: جعلت فداك الفتى عندنا الشابّ, قال (عليه السّلام) لي: أما علمت أن أصحاب الكهف كانوا كلهم كهولا فسماهم اللّه فتية بإيــــمانــــهم؟! يا سليمان من آمن باللّـــه وأتّقى فهو الفتى.

25. Imām Jaʿfar ibne Muḥammad as-Ṣādiq عليه السلام said the following to Sulaymān ibne Jaʿfar Al-Hadhalī: "O' Sulaymān, what is meant by a young person [Al-Fatā]?" He said, "May I be sacrificed for your sake. In our opinion, a young person [Al-Fatā] is a youth [Al-Shābb]." The Imām said to me, "However you should know that surely the Companions of the Cave [Aṣḥābul Kahf] were all old people, however Allāh refers to them as youth who have true faith?! O' Sulaymān, the one who believes in Allāh and has consciousness of Him is a young person."[55]

٢٦) قال الإمام الصّادق عليه السّلام: - لرجل – ما الفتى عندكم؟ فقال له: الشابّ, فقال: لا. الفتى: المؤمن، إنّ أصحاب الكهف كانوا شيوخا فسماهم اللّه عزّ وجلّ فتية بإيــــمانــــهم.

26. Imām Jaʿfar ibne Muḥammad as-Ṣādiq عليه السلام said to a man: "What is meant by a young person [Al-Fatā] in your estimation?"

[55] Tafsīr al-ʿAyāshi, Volume 2, Page 323, Ḥadīth 11

The man replied, "A youth." The Imām عليه السلام replied, "No, the young person [Al-Fatā] is the true believer. Surely the Companions of the Cave [Aṣḥābul Kahf] were all old people, however Allāh, Glory and Greatness be to Him, called them youth who believed in Him."[56]

[56] Al-Kāfī, Volume 8, Page 395 and 595

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

قال الإمام الحسن ابن علي المجتبى عليه السلام:

إنكم صغار قوم و يوشك أن تكونوا كبار قوم آخرين فتعلموا العلم. فمن لم يستطع منكم أن يحفظه فليكتبه و ليضعه في بيته

﴿ بحار الأنوار – ج ٢ – ص ١٥٢ – ح ٣٧ ﴾

Imām Ḥasan ibne `Alī al-Mujtabā (peace be upon him) has said:

"Surely today you are the youth of the nation, and tomorrow, you will be the leaders of the community, thus, it is incumbent upon you to seek knowledge. So then if you are not able to memorize all that you learn, then you must write it down and preserve it (for safe keeping) so that you can refer to it later on (when you need it)."

Biḥārul Anwār, Volume 2, Page 152, Ḥadīth 37